



92-216

216

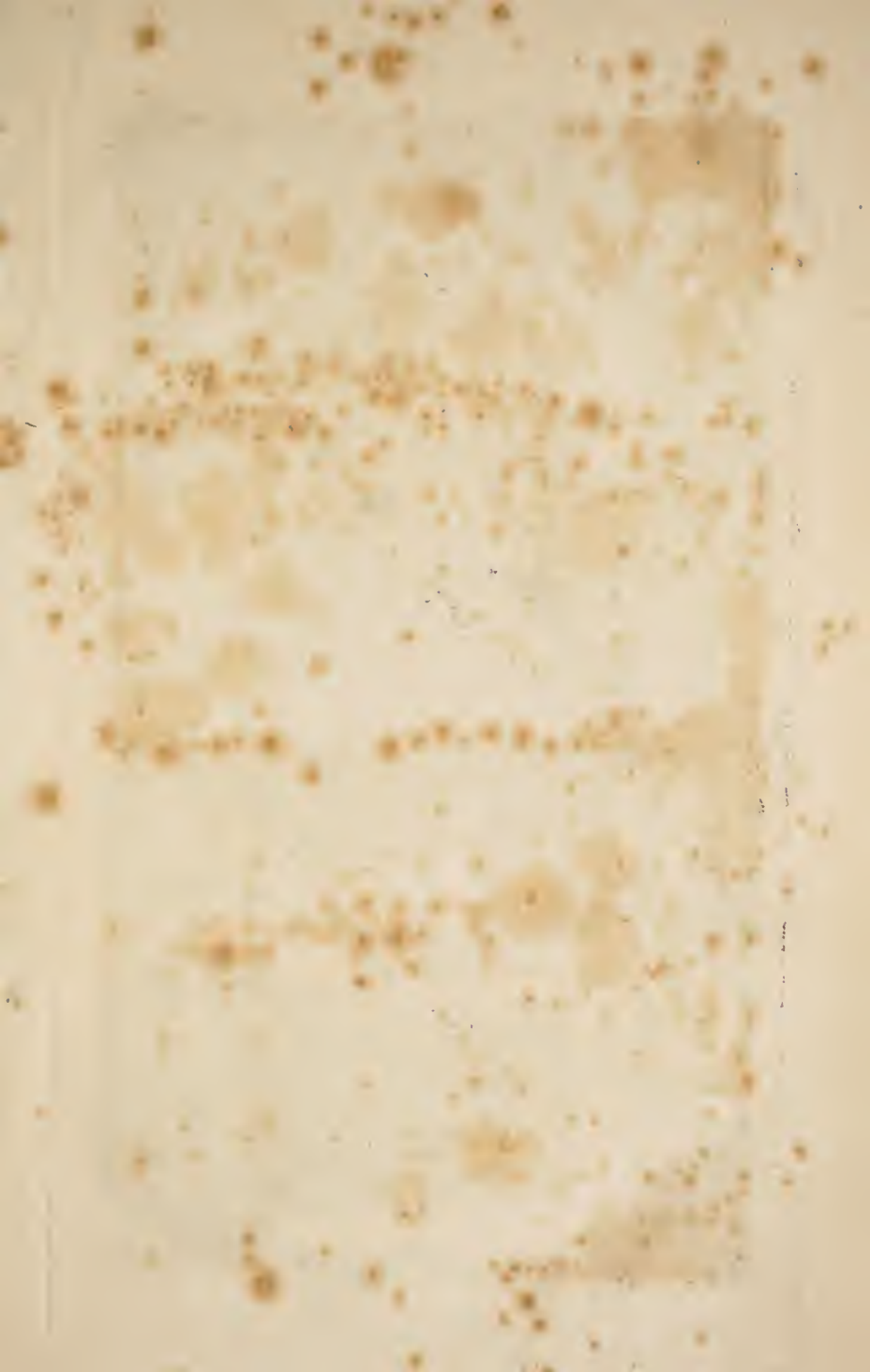
m/f

DUKE
UNIVERSITY
LIBRARY

Treasure Room



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2011 with funding from
Duke University Libraries



THE
GOLDEN ASS
OF
LUCIUS APULEIUS,
OF MEDAURA,

REPRINTED FROM THE SCARCE EDITION OF 1709,
REVISED AND CORRECTED.

*Tota porrò hæc Metamorphosis Apulciana, et stylo, et sententiâ, satyricon
est perpetuum, in quo magica deliria, sacrificulorum scelera, adulterorum cri-
mina, furum et latronum impunitæ factiones, palàm differuntur.*

(Barthius. Adversaria. l. 51, cap. 11.)

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL I.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR E. WHEATLEY,
ENGLISH AND FOREIGN BOOKSELLER, 10, RYDER'S COURT,
LEICESTER SQUARE.

1821.

G. Schulze, Printer, 13, Poland Street.

To

The Honorable

HENRY ST. JOHN, *Esq.*

*This Volume is likewise Humbly
Dedicated,*

By his

most Humble

and Obedient Servant.

THE
EPISTLE DEDICATORY,

TO THE HONORABLE

HENRY ST. JOHN, Esq.

SIR,

THOUGH addresses of this nature, by the folly and false hopes of too many authors suffer under an imputation too general and unjust, yet while Mr. *St. John* is my patron, I have not the least apprehension of erring with the many, or of being thought to sacrifice more to hope than to justice.

Books were anciently addressed either to a friend, or a confessed master in the art or subject of the discourse, as a sure guard against the assaults of the *little critics* and *lesser pretenders* to art, who

form a party so formidable in courts and great cities, that a man of art and true sense, has reason to fortify himself against them ; or lastly, they were the just and grateful offerings to the public merit of those who had done generous service to their country, civil or military.

Though I have not the happiness of challenging the honor of the first; yet your just claim to both the last, which are of far greater import, abundantly justify my address.

Though the following treatise be in prose for the most part, yet it being a poetical production in the original and both its copies, it has a sort of right to fly to the protection of a person, who has given the world sufficient proofs of his skill in that art.

Let it not be thought a blemish in you, Sir, to excel in that science, to arrive at which so many great men have discovered an impotent ambition. *Cicero* has left us his lame efforts at, and in many places his high esteem for, poetry ; *Augustus* and *Mecenas* attempted in vain to emulate *Horace* and *Virgil*, whom they warmed

with their favor and bounty ; *Julia* during the siege of *Athens* wrote a play, and the great *Scipio* and *Lelius* were at least assistants to *Terence* ; *Marius* himself, as rough and sour as his disposition was, could not curb the discovery of his satisfaction at hearing the verses of *Archias* on his *Cimbric* wars ; and *Homer* was the perpetual bosom companion of *Alexander the Great*. So truly grounded is that sentence of *Petronius Arbiter* :

Qui mentem magnis applicat det primos versibus annos.

It was that genius which you received from *nature* for these studies, and your intimacy with the muses, that gave you so early a capacity of discharging such great trusts and posts, of both prince and people, with so just an applause. Whoever indeed, is struck with the *love of sacred song*, must be free from that rapacious thirst of gain, which always eclipses the brightest parts, obscures the greatest merit, and renders the greatest power invidious and contemptible to all mankind. For though avarice be, in a manner, the epidemic distemper of this age, yet there is nothing so hateful in the eye of

the people, and of all that participate not of the same vice and folly.

It is indeed to the reigning *private spirit*, that we owe those scandalous remains of that *barbarism*, which is but too visible in the neglect of the *politer studies*, which only want the encouragement of the great to raise the *British* name above all the moderns, and to a rivalship of the *antients*.

Were I so happy to be one of the genuine sons of art, who am only an humble admirer of the muses, my prayer would be that the age might have many *St. Johns*, who with a generous and united force, might at once reduce the forward and ignorant pretenders to their just contempt, and lift the humble artist to that applause, which he only deserves. Only men of your understanding and temper can ever do that justice to your country's reputation, of whom we may say with *Horace* of *Tibullus* :

*Non tu corpus eras sine pectore di tibi formam ;
Di tibi divitias dederant, artemq ; fruendi.*

And we find you, Sir, always

Curantem quicquid dignum sapiente, bonoq ; est.

Among which I am confident the province of the *muses* cannot have the last place and consideration.

It is not that I fear offending a false modesty that I forbear paying that tribute of praise here, which is your due, and drawing your character for the view of the public ; but from a sense of my inability to perform so difficult a task, and an apprehension of being thought to undertake a thing perfectly superfluous ; since that is what is known to all the world already.

Yes, Sir, were you less known and admired, I could bring such a voucher of your excellence as would alone be a greater panegyric than any pen could give you ; for to be so dear to the greatest *genius* of the age, as eminent for his generous temper as wit and understanding, is a proof that he finds those admirable qualities in you, which answer to those in himself, since a similitude of those is always the foundation of so singular a friendship. But your merit, Sir, has long been too well known to stand in need of any other voucher, though ever so great, and illustrious ; and under the

protection of which I shall have very little dread of either the *critics* or *fortune*, though all things of this nature are too much subject to both ; but your approbation being my chief aim and desire, all other considerations will be little regarded by,

SIR,

Your most Humble

and most Obedient

Servant.

THE

PREFACE.

THIS preface is not an idle compliment to custom, or to insinuate my compliance with the importunities of friends in the publication of the following book : but there being a necessity of premising some few lines on the present performance, and the original or ground on which it is built.

The famous Lucian furnished the first hint, (for so I must call his Ass in comparison of what has since been done on it) and Apuleius enlarged it into eleven books. I shall not say much about Lucian, as to the excellency of his genius, its nature and the like, that being done admirably well in his life written by Mr. Dryden, and now ready to be published. But I must say (with the critic's permission) that Apuleius has much improved his sketch, by the addition of various discoveries in his assinine condition, which was indeed, or ought to have been the chief aim of the invention.

I must avow myself as great an admirer of

the ancients, with justice, as any man can be without affectation. I allow that their designs were masterly, and that they always had nature in their eye, in their draughts of man in his passions or manners, to which most of our celebrated modern poets have had but little regard; those, at least, who have found the best success, have been those who deviate the most from the valuable paths of nature, true rhetoric, or even common sense.

But then I cannot put Lucian absolutely into that illustrious class, he lived in an age when the taste of the people was as loose and debauched as their principles and manners; and Lucian, with all his wit, could not escape the infection of the times, as is plain from his defence of dancing, in which, though he gives a great many just praises to that art, then in its perfection, yet when he prefers it even to a tragedy, he pays but a slender deference to sense.

I urge this to obviate the objections of a sort of gentlemen, who though nature has given them parts sufficient to make a tolerable figure among men of sense, lessen what they have by the affectation of seeing more in an old author, than any one else can discover. This proceeds from the pride of being thought greater scholars than the rest of the company, though in reality they only palm their own

fancy upon you for a beauty of the author's invention, and which is often only so in their own single apprehension.

These gentlemen's select flowers are generally only words. The happy turn of an expression, a phrase full and surprising, commands their adoration ; but for the design and conduct of the piece, they know no more of it than if they had never read an author. These are mere grammaticasters, and read books like Dutch commentators, busying themselves with empty words, while they pass over excellencies much greater and more charming. The authors that are their darlings have reason to complain of their praise, as Zeuxis in Lucian does of those who had seen his admirable piece of the Centaurs. The applause was ever in the wrong place ; they were not touched with the mastery of his design or performance, but the most trifling errors of his pencil put them into raptures. I have seen the same at that present favorite monster called an opera, when the finest *ariettos*, and *da capos* passed unregarded, and the horrible *recitativo* put the heads of affected coxcombs in motion, as agitated with an agony of pleasure.

I know that gentlemen of this kidney will never allow Apuleius a place in the presence of Lucian, and look on his attempt at the same thing as an impudence worthy the barbarism

of a modern man of Africa. Yet I shall not hesitate, in spite of their supercilious censure, to prefer Apuleius to Lucian in this particular, because he has heightened the satire and improved the design, which are things of far greater consequence than all the petty beauties of diction, in which they cannot be well compared, because Lucian wrote in Greek, and Apuleius in Latin. However, I will be so complaisant to these critics to allow Lucian the advantage in the diction, and be content that Apuleius has the preference in the improvement of the design. But that this may not be looked on as *gratis dictum*, we will come to particulars, we find Lucian's Ass filled either with the arch rogueries of a country boy, by which he suffered in his person in that assinine shape, or his other hardships in travelling, burdens and the like, with some little hint at the discoveries he made of the vices of men and women, who hid them from mankind. But Apuleius, though he kept all that Lucian furnished in those particulars, yet he everywhere improved the hint, and enlarged the image he would represent; he has also taken care to multiply and embellish all those stories which showed the salaciousness of the women, and the knavery and brutality of the priests of the Syrian goddess, the abandoned lives and rogueries of the robbers, and so to the rest; so that his

book may be called a satire on the vices of men and women ; and Lucian's the picture of the miserable condition of the life of an ass.

I confess, there are several trifling things in Apuleius, or such at least as would certainly seem so to us, though the superstition of those times will afford no contemptible vindication of most of them. His style will perhaps admit of a debate whether it be allowable or positively bad. That he has affected a very poetical diction is visible to every reader, but whether a style so crammed with metaphorse, and so verbose, be allowable to prose, I shall not here determine ; though I have no contemptible authority for what Apuleius has done, and I might urge that the whole being a poetical fiction, he was at liberty to adapt his style to his subject : for though verses be chosen as most harmonious according to Aristotle, yet a fable is no less a poem for being in prose.

I cannot dismiss Apuleius, without saying something about so considerable a part of his book, as the fable of Psyche. Athenæus has wrote it much larger, and with a greater circuit of words and prolixity, which Apuleius confines to two books. There have been several morals given it, but few or none that seem to fall within the design of the inventor of the fable. Some have made it the union of soul and body ; others Adam and Eve, and the tree of

knowledge, and the like. For my part, it seems to me to be a moral chiefly against curiosity, as is instanced twice by Cupid himself. The fable of the celebrated Oedipus is against the same fault or folly, and all the lamentable fate of that Prince is plainly the consequences of it. The heathen priesthood had reason to level their batteries against it, for they were conscious of follies so great in their gross impositions on the people, that they might well fear a discovery from a liberty to curiosity.

It now remains, that I say a word or two to the modern improvement of Apuleius. I hope that I shall not be accounted too partial to our own age, if I here give the advantage to the modern from the two antients. For the same reason, that sets Apuleius before Lucian, prefers the modern to both, the design being in the last most complete. An ass was an animal that could scarce come into any place where there could be any secret transacted, and, therefore, no proper machine for the discovery of secret vices, and unmasking hypocrisy. But a fine Bologna lap-dog is admitted to the closets, cabinets, and bedchambers of the fair and the great, and therefore a transformation into that shape was more proper and conducive to the design, than that of Lucian and Apuleius. The modern has taken care to do by Apuleius, what he did by Lucian, that is, to transplant all that he could

suppose would any way thrive and flourish in his own plantation.

Besides those, he has added discoveries of the intrigues of the widows, and their peculiar love politics, which are not in either the Greek or Latin authors. Instead of the priests of the Dea Syria, with whose actions the present state of Europe has little to do, he has inserted the rogueries, cheats and debauches of the friars and jesuits; who, though grafted on Christianity, have as far excelled the wickedness of those itinerant mendicants of paganism with their strolling divinity, as the excellence of the christian religion is greater than the mere inventions of man, for *Corruptio optimi est pessima*.

Whether the stories of the jesuits, and friars and nuns be literally true, I will not pretend to determine, but this I can say, I can parallel, nay, exceed them in authentic accounts, already published to the world. So that the Romanists have no just cause of complaint of any impostures of our author, who has said no more of them than their own writers justify, and Henry Stephens proves from undoubted records.

It may be objected, that too much of these two volumes is spent before the transformation. To which I must answer, that Apuleius is not metamorphosed till the end of the third book, Fantasio at the end of the second; and though the books of the modern are something larger, than those of the ancient, yet the whole work

consisting of twelve books, six only of which are now published, it bears a better proportion to the whole, than the other.

There is one thing peculiar to the Italian, which is neither in the Greek nor the Latin, which is, that the modern has taken care occasionally to intersperse discourses, letters, and verses, on various and curious subjects, with frequent moral reflections, which are not to be found in the others.

Both the Italian and myself have endeavoured to come as near the stile of Apuleius as the difference of time, and the rights of the languages would permit. To conclude, there is nothing in the Latin author worth our reading, that is not in the translation. And since so many wretched books have taken with the town, purely because translated from the French, I was in hopes that a version of an Italian, when the follies of that nation are so much in vogue, would not be despised. But if nothing but such sick dreams as the Arabian Nights Entertainments : the Devil upon Two Sticks, &c. will go down, the London-bridge booksellers have reason to hope, that Valentine and Orson, and Tom Thumb, in folio, and such more valuable trifles may speedily be advanced from the nursery to the cabinets of the fair, and the studies of the wits ; but indeed England at this time seems the Africa of wit, where only monsters thrive and domineer, both on the theatre and in the press.

THE INTRODUCTION.

To Signor Giovanni Vecchio Letame, of the academy of La Crusca in Florence, Carlo Monte Socio, of the academy of the Humoristi in Rome, wishes health, happy days, and pleasing nights.

I SEND you, my good friend, with this billet, a copy of the manuscript taken from that of the memorable Signor Fumoso de la Fantasia, of the delightful province di Parnasso, filled with the strange and wonderful fortunes which befel him, and the surprising adventures he met with during his long peregrination in a borrowed shape, which at once delivered him from disasters he could no otherwise have escaped, and gave him admittance to secrets he could only this way have attained.

I shall neither raise your expectation from a promise of uncommon pleasure in the perusal, (though you will find a variety that will bid fair for it,) nor anticipate your satisfaction in a prefatory dis-

covery of the design. All that I have to tell you of this affair, is, that passing into England with the Venetian ambassador, during my stay there, I had the good fortune to fall into an acquaintance and intimacy with Signor Fumoso de la Fantasia, whom for brevity we used to call Fantasio. By this means I had the opportunity of perusing all his manuscripts, which though numerous, had their several particular excellencies, which at once engaged and instructed.

Though he was not fond of shewing his performances to every one he knew, yet I had the happiness of being one of those in whom he reposed a particular confidence, to which I owe the liberty he gave me of transcribing what I pleased from them. And this has made my power equal to my will, to comply with your desires of having a transcript of his transformation into a Bologna lap-dog ; a form more opportune for the discovery of the secrets and intrigues of ladies and great men, than that of an ass, who could not be admitted beyond the very stable, or at most to a nearer view of the

affairs of the mob. Let no man object, that there is more proportion between an ass and a man in bulk, than between a fine Bologna dog ; for the power of magic can do one as well as the other, and cram a giant into a pigmy, as well as change the human to the bestial form. Does not every old woman furnish us with proofs of witches being transformed into cats, weasels, &c. ? To the facilitating of this change, nature had contributed by the diminutive figure of Fantasio, as you will find in his own account of himself.

But though he was not unwilling to let me transcribe this piece, as well as others, yet he laid his injunction upon me not to publish it in print, lest the incredulity of an impious age should render his whole narration suspected of imposture.

Under this difficulty I had no way left but to send you the manuscript itself, enjoining you a speedy return, lest you be tempted to communicate that to another, which I send only for your own diversion ; for I would no more have my pleasures common than my mistress. I have bequeathed this, with the rest of the manu-

scripts of Signor Fumoso de la Fantasia di Parnasso, to the Vatican library, to increase that celebrated repository of rarities : and as I design you my trustee in this particular, so I am the more willing you should see and consider of the value of the legacy.

But I will no longer detain you from your more agreeable conversation with Fantasio himself,

Farewell.

THE LIFE OF APULEIUS.

THE following discourse being founded on the works of *Lucius Apuleius*, I thought it would not be ungrateful to the reader to give him the life of that author, before this second volume, instead of a preface. But the gentlemen of the pen have generally been so remote from action, that their lives afford little of fact, to entertain. However what I have been able to collect I shall deliver.

The birth-place of *Apuleius* was of considerable reputation, for he was born in *Medaura*, a city of *Africa*, situated in the confines of *Numidia* and *Getulia*, anciently in the jurisdiction of king *Syphax* and then under *Massinissa*, and

was afterwards a very noble colony of the *Romans*. His father's name was *Theseus*, a principal man of the place, who had the honorable employment of *Duumvir*, and passed through all the other honorable posts of the magistracy of that city. His mother's name was *Salvia*, deriving herself directly from that eminent philosopher of the *Cheronesus* and his grandson *Sextus*, who read philosophy to the emperor *Antoninus* the philosopher, as *Capitolinus* assures us. The time of his nativity is not very certain, though we make some probable conjectures about it, for we may draw arguments of sufficient force, that he flourished chiefly in the reigns of *Antoninus Pius* and his brothers *M. Antoninus* the philosopher and *Lucius Aurelius Verus*. For he mentions *C. V. Lollianus Avitus*, who, as we have observed from *Ulpian* and the same *Capitolinus*, was president of *Bithynia* in the reigns of the two last emperors I have named, and that he lived even in the time of *Pertinax*, being then a man of consular dignity. He also calls *Lollius Urbicus* prefect of the city,

who, the same historian assures us, was lieutenant general to *Antoninus Pius*, and in that station vanquished the *Britons*. He likewise seems to make *Scipio Orphitus* president of *Africa*, whom the same author makes prefect of the city in the reign of the same *Antoninus Pius*, and afterwards in the reign of *Antoninus* the philosopher; he was exalted to many honors and dignities, though he lay under the suspicion of being one of those who had a private and clandestine affair with *Faustina*, and who seems about that time to have passed through his consulship. And our civilian gives us an account of the act of the senate of the time of *Marcus Aurelius* in the consulship of *Orphitus* and *Rufus*, and called the *Orphistan* act, from the name of one of the consuls. And *Ælius Lampridias* tells us of *Orphitus* who was consul with *Maximus* and *Rufus*, likewise under the emperor *Commodus*. It is true indeed, that there might, in those times, be more, of the name of *Orphitus* than one, but this place will not admit of a long disquisition on that head; for out of all this

we only design to draw our conjectures about the time of the birth of our *Apuleius*, that is, in the latter end of the reign of *Adrian*, or very near it.

He was from his childhood extremely inclined to learning, and study was his delight, first at *Carthage* and afterwards, in his youth, at *Athens*, where he attained to all manner of liberal sciences, and where he was for the most part a follower of the *Platonists*.

Whence being come to *Rome* he applied himself to the study of the *Latin* tongue, which he learnt with no small difficulty, having no master to give him any instructions in it, as he himself tells us in his introduction to his *Golden Ass*, the book from whence so much is taken of this new *Metamorphosis* and on which the whole is built.

In *Rome* he also made such a progress in the civil law, that he pleaded causes in the *forum* as an advocate.

He was initiated into the sacred rites and mysteries of the religion of the times in *Greece*; and he himself often informs us that he was a priest in the province

of *Africa*; which St. *Austin* likewise observes, who tells us that he, at that time, exhibited such entertainments and gave such presents as were usual on those occasions. About the same time his statue in brass was ordered by the decree of the senate to be set up in *Carthage*.

He was a man of a very considerable estate, but his many travels and great application to his studies, made him too negligent of his affairs not to have them embezzled by servants.

Pudentilla, his wife, was of *Oca*, another city of *Africa*. She was a woman of years, and a widow, having a son by her former husband called *Pontianus*, who died soon after her marriage with *Apuleius*. Though she was something aged, yet she was very rich, bringing with her four million sesterii, which makes 31,250 pounds sterling, every thousand sesters being 7*l.* 16*s.* 3*d.* She had been thirteen years a widow, when she married *Apuleius*.

This considerable fortune by his wife was the occasion of some trouble to *Apu-*

leius, for it drew on him the accusation of *Sicinius Emylianus*, brother to his wife's former husband, before the pro-consul of *Africa*, *Claudius Maximus*, as guilty of the unlawful practice of the art of magic. The charge was that he had by diabolical charms bewitched *Pudentilla*, a lady something in years, to be in love with him, and to have murdered his son-in-law *Pontianus*.

But this malicious prosecution gave occasion for him to defend himself before *Maximus*, in an oration of a considerable length, which is yet extant, and bound up with his other works. He there tells us that *Sicinius Æmilianus*, for fear of being punished for a wrong and unjust prosecution, had entered a libel in the name of *Sicinius Pudens*, the son-in-law of *Apuleius*, yet almost an infant, which would not be admitted by *Maximus*, but he ordered him to bring the accusation in his own name.

Apuleius in his answer clears that eastern philosophy called magic, from the ignorant imputations of the vulgar, and himself, against the insinuations of *Ton-*

nonius Pudens, the advocate of the plaintiff, whose objections were so foolish and trifling, that they surprize the reader with wonder, that a proconsul of *Africa* should have patience to hear them. They object that when he came to *Oca*, the residence of *Pudentilla*, he had but one servant, that afterwards he had three freemen at a time. Nay, they accuse him of having his face clean, using a looking-glass, and the like trifles, which they supposed might reflect on him, as deviating from the duty of a philosopher. They insinuated, that he gave a great price for certain fishes; had given *Pudentilla* a sort of fascinating letter, and the like, which *Apuleius* with ease and address refutes, and exposes as highly ridiculous, in the proof of his practising an unlawful magic.

Though he has thus acquitted himself of the magic laid to his charge by *Sicinius Æmilianus*, yet, says a certain writer of his life, he declares himself in his *Metamorphosis* more than once to be a mighty lover of that art. But this seems

a very trifling conclusion, which would draw a proof of a reality and opinion from a book of fancy, a fable of pleasure.

Apuleius in the introduction to his *Golden Ass*, does not only tell you his great inclinations to magic, but even his credulity in its incredible power. But this author does not consider, that *Apuleius* having to write a book of the transformation of himself into an ass, was obliged, as much as possible, to prepare the credibility of the fact by relations of wonders of this nature done in *Thessaly*, always famous for *Witches* and magical charms. In this he has followed *Lucian* in the main, though he has heightened it by some particulars which gives it the greater air of truth. Thus he listens with all the attention, and the greatest assurance of believing to what *Aristomenes* tells of the extravagant fate of his friend *Socrates*; and justifies the possibility of the events, that happened to him by the *Meroe*, by the account of what he himself had seen a juggler do publicly in the streets at *Athens*. Because all this was

necessary to prepossess the reader in favour of his own *Metamorphosis* into an ass, by the mistake of *Fotis* in the magical ointments of her mistress *Pamphila*.

But continues my author, he had the same reputation in the time of *Tertulian*, *St. Austin*, and others of the old fathers of the church ; and that he was a disciple of *Apollonius Tyaneus*, and other masters in magic, whose miracles the heathens have pretended to have been greater and more numerous than those of our Lord and Saviour.

This seems so far from being an authority in this case, that it is only built on the vulgar opinion, which easily makes a conjurer of a man of more than ordinary parts and learning, who was noted for his curious enquiries into nature, having examined the writing of *Aristotle* by experiments of his own, and wrote books both in *Greek* and *Latin* on the nature of fishes and their several kinds, manner of generation, and the like ; the dissection of which gave the ignorant an occasion of thinking him a magician,

as the dissection of other animals had given the people of *Abdera* a notion that *Democritus* was mad.

It is no wonder, that if, when he was alive, these things gave ground for a public accusation, the rumour might increase and spread after his death; from which the fathers might borrow their notion. Nay, when he came before *Claudius Maximus*, he plainly declares, that he does not credit those common notions of the powers of magic; and doubts even the prognostication of the prophetic boys, whether in nature possible or not. And this passage in his apology would persuade me, that his being a follower of *Apollonius*, is either a mistake in the fathers, or that he did not follow him on account of wonders that he worked; for the seeing such incredible things done by art, could have left no room for any doubt whether they could be done or not. Besides, the *Platonists* had too noble an idea of God, to apply to the devil for any thing, and *Apuleius* has not only wrote on the platonic philosophy but upon the demon of

Socrates, both which tracts are still extant and bound up with his works.

This is sufficient, I hope, to clear our author from the imputation of the black art, of which he only made use as a machine to convey the satire he designed, with the greater face of probability.

From *Apuleius* we gather more of his cotemporaries, for he mentions *Severianus* the proconsul of *Africa*, and his son *Honorius*, who was his lieutenant; *Strabo Æmilianus* of *Numantia*, his school-fellow, to whom he seems to have dedicated his book; and the poet *Clemens*, who wrote the actions of *Alexander* the Great in verse.

Apuleius wrote a great deal in prose and not a little in verse, many things in *Greek*, and not less in *Latin*. The greatest part of which have perished by the injury of time. Those which have reached to our time are the following: Eleven books of the *Metamorphosis*, or the *Golden Ass*, the ground work of our present entertainment. His *apology* or *Oration about Magic*. His book of the *World*. Five books of the

Opinion of Plato, or of Philosophy ; the first of Natural Philosophy, the second Ethics, and the third Rational. His book of the God of Socrates. His Florida. His sportive verses translated from Theander.

The following are those, only whose names, and some few fragments, we could get out of the writings of the old grammarians.

Many copies of verses, among which there were not a few amorous *epigrams*, *epistles*, a book **de Ludicris* : of *Proverbs*, of *Trees* ; of *Numbers* ; of the *Commonwealth* ; *Table Talk* ; of natural Questions and of *medicinal* ; *Hermagoras* I. *Hermagoras* II. A translation of *Plato's Phædo*. An *Epitome of History* ; an *Hymn and Dialogue on Æsculapius*. His *Oration* on account of the statue that was to be set up to him in *Oca*.

Thus much I have to say of this *Apuleius* who was author of the *Metamorphosis*. I shall only add for the information of our little critics, that *Apuleius* very

* What these *Libri Ludicri* were, is yet undecided.

well distinguished his subject, and therefore adapted his style to the nature of it; the style of his *Golden Ass* is extremely luxuriant, it being to clothe the child of fancy, which is always gay and gaudy. But in his apology he adapts it justly to the bar. In his philosophical works it is proper for the didactic, and in his *Florida* it is concise and historic, and I do not doubt but that he observed the same beauty of diction in all those works of his that are left. But our modern wits and authors are generally so injudicious, as to keep the same invariable style, let their subject be what it will; and yet are so happy as to get reputation by their ignorance, though indeed it must be owned, that it is only among the ignorant; yet since that is a party of figure and power, it proves a great discouragement to men of art and genius, that follow the ancients, nature and reason. But thus it will be till some man of capacity, and perfect in true policy, shall rescue learning and merit from its subjection to fools; but

THE
NEW METAMORPHOSIS;

OR,

The Pleasant Transformation.

THE FIRST BOOK.

CHAPTER I.

Of the country, parents, birth, education, person, temper, and inclination of Fantasio, and of his leaving his native country and arrival at Rome.

THE following surprising adventures of my life may happen to start a curiosity in the reader, of knowing something of my person, my parents, my quality, birth, inclinations, and education. To anticipate therefore his inquiry, I must inform him, that my name is *Fumoso de la Fantasia*, or for brevity, *Don Fantasio*; a family as reputable as any in the whole delightful province *di Parnasso*. My grandfather (the first of this branch of

the *Fantasi*, of which I am) was Signor *Luciano d'Asino*, my father *Apuleio d'Asino d'oro*, my mother was Donna *Musa del Inventione*, daughter of Signor *Giudici de la Fantasia*, all of the same family and celebrated country.

Nature, however favorable she has been pleased to be to my *mind*, has not been very expensive and prodigal in the materials of my body. But I have found no great cause to complain of her parsimony in my bulk, since she has had so great an eye to proportion and use. And while I find a just symmetry of my parts, and a sufficiency to their end, I am free from the scandal of deformity, and uneasiness of incapacity of any pleasure, which the larger and more bulky part of mankind enjoy. Nay, I have this satisfaction peculiar to myself, to remember the virtuosos and philosophers have always agreed, *that the cunning and wisdom of nature, is never so apparent as in the most minute of her productions.*

My mother had the particular advantage of the genuine natives of this clime; for she brought me forth without any of those raging pangs which are so general in travail. And as my birth gave her no pain, so my being supplied her with abundance of joy, whilst I remained under the guardianship of her eye, and the direction of her love; where still she would have kept me, had not the natural

roving of my temper, and the force of my destiny, driven me from her tender and endearing embraces, to seek new fortunes abroad.

My education was prudently adapted to the bent of my genius, averse from the barren and knotty trifles of the schools, and only delighted with the gayer and politer doctrines of the *muses*, that were most useful to the forming the *mind* and the *manners*; my parents took care to indulge my inclinations, and furnish all the advantages of those agreeable studies, which the custom of the place, and the inclination of the people, easily supplied.

As the delightful province *di Parnasso* enjoys all the indulgence of smiling *nature*, so it seldom abounds with the favors of *fortune*. That was a defect which too sensibly affected me; so that foolishly unsatisfied with the blessings of the *former*, and as fondly desirous of the gaudy curses of the *latter*, at the age of eighteen I leave the calmer recesses of my paternal abode, in pursuit of the false, though alluring prospects of cities and courts; and bribed by the hopes of glory and power, I listed myself in the *legions* of fortune; grasping already the trophies she promised with faithless assurance to all that adored her. But, alas! the blind goddess unmindful of merit or justice, betrayed me to miseries as great as surprising.

Rome, the proud head of the catholic world, that holds now almost as large an empire over the consciences of nations, as it once did over their persons ; *Rome*, I say, was the place where I flattered myself I should arrive to that grandeur and wealth, which already my hopes had devoured : for *Rome* is the *market*, where riches and power are bartered for words, hypocrisy, or cunning address.

Being arrived in this city, I began to consider where to take my first station, and fix my first step on the ladder of fortune, to mount to that height which my ambition proposed. On a narrow inquiry I found that the Cardinal *Cantelmi* of the house of *Popoli*, by the advantage of his posts, had it most in his power to answer my desires : for he was Archbishop of Naples, legate *a latere*, chief minister of state, and privado to the Pope ; and of interest enough in the same college, one day to seize on the triple diadem.

The prospect of interest with such a minion of fortune, was too engaging not to stir up my endeavours to get into his family ; but as the first step is the most difficult in making a man's fortune, so all my attempts, without money and acquaintance, only served to let me see the vanity of my hopes ; til chance one day supplied by a lucky hit all other defects.

CHAPTER II.

Being an account of Fantasio's getting into the family of Cardinal Cantelmi, and of the festivals of gallantry, which the noblemen of Rome make in the churches for the entertainment of their mistresses, which brought him to the knowledge of Donna Theresa, the beautiful niece of the Cardinal.

UNEASY with my bad fortune at home, and partly to divert the melancholy thoughts that might arise from too serious a view, and partly out of curiosity to see the celebrated places of this great city, one day I went abroad, and passing the *Piazza Navonna*, my eyes were saluted by a magnificent church, called *de la Pace*. The porch, though adorned with all the art of the architect and the advantage of the purest white marble for its materials, yet unsatisfied with these ornaments, which last all the year long, the priests had hung it all round with a thousand curious pictures of the best masters, and abundance of figures, made in a sort of *mosaic* work (as I may call it) of silk of various colours, after the mode of *Bononia*, which city is exquisite in performances of this nature.

This pomp of the porch assured me of some solemnity prepared within, worthy the view of

a stranger, and always entertaining to a devotee of *pleasure* and *music*. On my entrance I presently found, that all this preparation was for a *festival of gallantry*, which some nobleman or man of wealth at least, had exhibited at his own charge and expense, according to the custom of *Italy*; where the admirable music and harmony of ladies, always invited on these occasions, supply the advantages of the *theatres* of less sanctified countries.

This feast was, as I found on inquiry, in honor of St. *Theresa*: that is, the name of St. *Theresa* was the bawd of Count *Luciano's* addresses to Donna *Theresa*, the beautiful niece of Cardinal *Cantelmi*, Archbishop of *Naples* and favorite of the Pope. For the Saint that is chosen by the gallants who are masters of the *festival*, bears always the name of their mistresses to whom it is in reality devoted, consisting of *first* and *second vespers* and *masses*. For as the painters in their *Madonna's* always copy their most favoured mistresses, so these noble devotees, through the Saint triumphant, convey their addresses to the Saint militant.

A throne was erected exactly against the gate, for the view of all that entered the church. This throne was surrounded with a glorious company of gentlemen of quality, among the foremost of whom sat the Count *Luciano*, at whose expense this feast was exhibited in honor of St. *The-*

resa, or rather of the Cardinal's niece, as four other young noblemen had done already in devotion to their mistresses.

The constant ornaments of this church *de la Pace*, are as magnificent as most in this city, being painted and gilt all within, and every where adorned with statues worthy observation. But on this extraordinary occasion several triumphal arches were erected, embellished with the representation of the several transactions of the life of St. *Theresa*; all the figures of the holy history being wrought in silk of various colours by the *addobatori*, or church adorners, plentiful enough all over *Italy*, who had been above three weeks preparing this piece of holy pageantry.

On each side the choir and the throne I have mentioned, a theatre was erected, one for the vocal, and the other for the instrumental music; each band consisting of fifty performers, besides four *solos* in a little box near the altar, who were the best voices in *Rome*.

Four hundred and forty-five white wax candles being now lighted, the music all ready, and the gallants impatient, the welcome message was brought, that the *Lady of the day* and their wishes, was very near the church; and the signal being given on her setting foot in the church, they began the first *anthem*.

Donna *Theresa's* arrival gave a new air to the

faces of the gallants, over which she spread a joy and satisfaction, to balance the uneasy impatience they had felt at her delay. It had been difficult for me to have discovered the fair idol of the solemnity, so many ladies entering the church with her, had not *Luciano* stepped from the throne and led her to a reading-desk prepared for her, and covered with a carpet of crimson velvet, surrounded with a deep golden fringe: and a great cushion of the same, most richly embossed, was laid for her to kneel on.

Her dress was modest, and her head covered with a large black veil, which fell down behind and on each side, almost as low as her feet, and by it, according to custom, her face was entirely hid. But that was an evil she had the goodness and dexterity of removing with a great deal of address; for under shew of sticking a pin, she frequently made shift to discover to the gentlemen, who eyed her with abundance of desire, some part of her face; and threw, now and then, as gracious a smile and regard with her eyes, as they could expect, or desire. Thus, though her breasts were covered with the veil, she had the agreeable art, by playing with it regardlessly, to give her admirers an easy and full view of so charming a bosom.

The music was incomparable, and the anthems taken out of the *Canticles*, were extremely more applicable to the *Lady*, than the *Saint*;

and the picture of the altar-piece, where the *mass* was to be said the next morning, I found to have the face of the beautiful *Theresa*.

About the middle of the prayers, two of the gentlemen took each a charger of flowers, to present every lady with a nosegay of carnations, rose-buds, and orange flowers, tied with a golden twist, to which was fastened a fair knot of ribbon, of about three or four yards. The first was presented to the Cardinal's niece, the sovereign of the day ; and in those flowers I perceived a billet nicely conveyed, which immediately, and with abundance of dexterity, she removed to her prayer-book, and there read it ; all I could discover of its contents, was *mia diva, my goddess*. The flowers were no sooner delivered, but from the galleries of the church fell a shower of printed papers, containing the praise of St. *Theresa* ; though that of Donna *Theresa* was chiefly expressed in the verses.

Though the music lasted four hours, yet the splendour of the church, of the ladies and gallants, and the exquisite harmony of the voices and instruments, made it seem not half an hour.

The next morning I returned to the church, no less charmed with the lady than the solemnity, and placed myself as near her as I had the day before. Many abbots and monks said

mass at the altar adorned with the picture of Donna *Theresa*, to honor the Count *Luciano* and his mistress. At the beginning of *high mass*, from the galleries fell down another shower of sonnets, in praise of the Saint and the young nobleman who was at the expense of the entertainment, and was master of the *festival*.

It was one a clock before *high mass* was done, when the ladies retired to their own homes, and the gentlemen and priests to an apartment near the church *de la Pace*, where a magnificent entertainment attended them; and the musicians to the sacristy, whither Count *Luciano* took care to send them large dishes of meat, and abundance of rich wine.

The notes, that according to custom were distributed about, signified, that *vespers* would begin exactly at three. I was punctual at the time at my post; but it was five ere the first *anthem* began, and the ladies and gentlemen settled in their places. All the difference betwixt this and the first *vespers* was, that the *anthems* were changed, and the ladies, besides the nosegays, were presented with chargers of sweetmeats, with which they filled their handkerchiefs.

While nothing but gaiety and pleasure filled all the place, I found a pain in my breast peculiar to myself. Not but I suppose, I had

a great many of that assembly companions in my passion for the charming *Theresa* ; but none but myself lay under those difficulties of despair, which my person and my circumstances conspired to throw on me. They were all men of quality, and the favorites of fortune, comely and proportioned, and furnished with the advantages of folly and impertinence, to render them agreeable to a *woman*. On the contrary, I was a child in appearance, a beggar in my condition, divided in my mind between ambition and love, and haunted with sentiments not slavish, nor trifling enough to make a successful address. It is true, both *love* and *ambition* might find in the person of *Theresa* matter enough for my hopes, yet destitute of friends and money, and wanting that necessary impudence, more prevalent with the *fair* than merit or dignity, despair was the only and terrible object of my thoughts. Yet fortune that loves to make a sport of our assurances, and rules with an absolute sway in human affairs, turned all my defects to my advantage, and gave me that success which her more happy minions sighed for in vain.

In the midst of my amorous complaints, before the second *vespers*, I thus expressed myself in this song made on my present condition :

SONG.

1

*O ! Strephon ! never be secure,
Or think you can retire ;
The little god of you is sure,
Wheree'er he shews his fire.*

2

*If Acme's charms are out of sight,
Bright Chloe's come in view ;
And where her eyes dispense their light,
There's no retreat for you.*

3

*For Chloe has a thousand charms
To wound your tender heart,
While you against such pleasing harms,
Hope no defence or art.*

4

*For ah ! like the soft syren's voice,
Your ravish'd sense she charms ;
You wish to fall by her bright eyes,
And perish in her arms.*

The last ceremony being over, and her flowers and sweetmeats tied up in her handkerchief, she laid them on the desk, till she adjusted herself for her departure, and had given the Count *Luciano* a return for the honors he had done her, while turning too quick at a noise on the other side of the church, she threw down her cargo of flowers and fruit ; they hit me on the head in their fall, and I

caught them in my arms before they could reach the ground, and with no small eagerness kissing their cover, I met her fair hands, and returned them to Donna *Theresa*.

The address of my delivery seemed too gallant for my age, which the smallness of my person would persuade not to exceed eleven years; my hair was of a lovely auburn, and in wanton ringlets fell down my shoulders, while my forehead was crowned with a wreath of smaller curls; my face though naturally fresh and blooming, was then made more ruddy with a conscious blush of desire and love. As my locks were of gold, so was my complexion of alabaster, which received a heightening warmth from the perfect vermilion of my cheeks; my eyes were black as sloes, and as sprightly as fire, though qualified then by a languishing look on so celebrated a beauty. All together I was an object too surprising to suffer *Theresa* not to take notice of my person and address. But infinitely pleased with my person and officiousness, and privileged by my childish appearance, she raised me to her seat; where she was pleased, by a thousand agreeable questions, to inquire into my parentage, circumstances, and name: and finding me a wanderer in the wilderness of *fortune*, she promised me her patronage in my addresses to her uncle, the Cardinal *Cantelmi*, whose

service I acknowledged myself ambitious of obtaining.

The prayers now being over, and the *festival* performed, the young *Luciano* was not a little proud and delighted with his magnificent discharge of all parts of the solemnity; and with pleasure in his eyes received the congratulatory applauses of all his companions. Now every lady returned to her abode, loaden with flowers and sweetmeats, and what they valued more, the billets and vows of their lovers, for these *festivals* are the rendezvous of the *gay* and the *amorous*; where the ladies, confined by a too rigorous custom of the country, by the indulgence of the church, and its useful devotions, uncontrolled have the liberty of seeing their gallants and making assignations, and ingeniously contriving how to finish their amours. For as our *Italian* proverb has it,

Chi manda la sua figliuola ad ogni festa, in poco tempo ne fa una putana. That is,

He that sends his daughter to every festival, in a short time will make her a whore.

For while the married and single *ladies* are ranged in their seats on each side the church, the *cavaliers* walk in the midst, and by that means have the opportunity of looking them in the faces, and of conveying billetdoux into

their hands. But I have no cause of quarrel to the liberties and indulgence of the *church*, since to that I owed a joy so transporting, as my acquaintance with Donna *Theresa*, the Saint of my vows, and the agreeable inlet to *ambition* and *love*. For charmed with my conversation, so unequal to my seeming years, she took me home with her, and with no small earnestness recommended me to the Cardinal ; telling him the events of my fortune, and my orphan condition, as unable to expect any support from my parents. She assured him that he would find something in me extremely beyond the boys of my age ; and expressed her satisfaction, in the hopes, that his Eminence would admit me into his train, and her protection.

The Cardinal was not a little surprised at my discourse ; pleased with my person, and indulging his niece's innocent inclinations, he easily admitted me into his family, and gave me in charge to the beautiful *Theresa*.

CHAPTER III.

An account of the pleasure and luxury of the Cardinal's house, and the agreeable prospect of success to his fortune, till love intervened and lost him in a passion for the beautiful Theresa, niece to the Cardinal ; and his greater distress in the Cardinal's infamous passion for him.

THE splendour and luxury of the Cardinal's palace gave me a bewitching earnest of those joys I desired. Grandeur and affluence went round in a circle, and every hour was crowned with pomp and with pleasure ; whilst each satisfied that appetite, which variety created, and enjoyment could not destroy.

Happy in such blessings, with pity I looked down on the insipid retreat of my parents ; and smiled at their choice of a lazy inactivity, incapable of giving delights so transporting as *cities* and *courts*. Applauding my judgment in quitting that supinity, I hugged myself in the thought of my lucky resolve, which had brought me to pleasures I could never else have known, and gave me of greater so charming a view.

Here fortune seems to have declared on my side, in placing me directly in the road to perferment, where I might have given a loose to my ambition, since imagination could scarce form

any thing so extravagant, that I might not have some hopes of from the fondness of the Cardinal, and the indulgence of his niece. But fate, that had designed me for adventures more uncommon, and destined me to misfortunes peculiar as extraordinary, roused up that fire of *love* so inconsistent with ambition and glory. To this end, she made use of the height of my favor to begin my disasters, while *Theresa's* eyes, and those other charms, which the privilege of my place and appearance discovered, smoothed the easy way to the precipice down which I must fall. For though ambition put in no small claim to my heart, yet the national folly of my country commanded the greater share; for few have been born in the province of *Parnasso*, who have not betrayed so peculiar a tendency to *LOVE*, as to surrender all other considerations to its satisfaction: an amorous constitution being the natural product of the place.

How was it then possible for me to see perpetually the dazzling beauties of *Theresa*, without a passion proportioned to the cause, which was every day heightened by the liberties she took, of dressing and undressing before me? Who, without agonies of desire, could see breasts round, and hard as an apple; a skin whiter than the driven snow, suffused with a glowing warmth, that brightened the colour and heightened the temptation, softer than

the down of swans and sweeter than all the balmy spices of *Arabia* ; legs turned with all the exactness of proportion ? in short, every limb and part so perfect, that had she sat to *Apelles*, she had saved him the pains of consulting so many several beauties to finish the picture of the bright *Queen of Love*, *Theresa* alone had been sufficient to rise up to the height of the painter's *idea* !

You may easily imagine what fires such sights as these were able to create in matter so susceptible of the flame as my heart. It cannot be expressed how I burnt with continual and ardent desires to possess such beauties, that would corrupt *St. Francis* himself, in spite of his refuge in his wife of *snow*.

The liberties she allowed me of tender caresses, was a vain solace, that only increased my desire : for under the notion of a child she believed all her permissions inoffensive. How oft have I sighed on her breasts, and panted with pleasure with my lips cleaving fast to her gently heaving bosom ; without any suspicion of my ability of satisfying a passion I seemed to be possessed of before the age of accomplishment.

All the relief I found was now and then by venting my passion in verse, which yet I durst not shew to *Theresa*, lest they might make a discovery that might rob me of those charming liberties, which were given to my impotence.

This ode I made one day when I retired from those visions of beauty, which only served to torment, not make me happy :

ODE.

1

*Less charming was the Grecian dame,
Who lighted with her eyes the flame,
That set the Trojan towers on fire,
And made proud Ilium in the blaze expire.*

2

*Less charming Leda was, though Jove
Unsafe from her bright eyes above,
Confessed her power, and owned his love.
And, while the swan, the god belies,
The fort he seizes by surprise :
But the tumultuous joys she feels,
The loved, divine impostor soon reveals.*

3

*Had Venus with my Cælia strove,
For beauty's prize in the Idalian grove,
She had born the apple from the Queen of Love.
Her present beauties had so charmed the boy,
He had hoped no distant, no adulterous joy,
And sought no Helen, but preserved his Troy.*

I had not been long in the family, but as I perceived myself touched with the charms of *Theresa*, so I found my self attacked by the fulsome and brutal inclinations of the men. *Alexis*

Bathyllus, *Hylas*, nay, and sometimes *Cupid*, was my name, in their mouths. But that which gave me the greatest uneasiness, was that I found the Cardinal himself not exempt from that abominable gusto. Him only I had cause to fear, both from his power, and from my lying in a bed in his anti-chamber. Had he been now as violent, as I afterwards found him, here the scene of my imaginary paradise must have shut up; and I must infamously have sunk under his desires, or felt his resentment for a refusal, which might have put an end to my life and my hopes all at once.

But as yet the foul passion only played about his heart, and it was not so violent as to conquer his business; the multiplicity of which at that time engrossed his hours too much to allow any to pleasure.

But fortune once more smiling in my distress, moved Donna *Theresa* to take me with her, as a diversion of her solitude in her retirement to a *Villa* of the Cardinal's, near *Tivoli*, about fifteen miles from *Rome*, and from whence you have a prospect, not only of that city, but of the beautiful country all around.

CHAPTER IV.

A description of the Villa of Cardinal Cantelmi at Tivoli: and an account of Theresa's going into the bath and Fantasio's admission to divert her with his discourse.

THE *Villa* of Cardinal *Cantelmi* having a lofty situation, has an agreeable view of all the *Campania* of *Rome*. The house is of the *Ionic order*, and a square figure; and though adorned with many rarities of art, the gardens draw the admiration of all strangers. For being on the side of a hill, there are four rows or degrees of descent, each furnished with *cascades*, *grottos* and *water-works* of admirable art and variety. The river *Anio*, which runs behind this hill, being admitted by secret conveyances, cut through the rocks of the mountains, supplies all these gardens with water; for the gardener, by turning a great cock, lets in as much as is sufficient for the fountains, *cascades*, *grottos*, *girandola*, and all the other exquisite *water-works*. Hence is made a most spacious fountain and stairs of water, which directs your eye to a walk two hundred paces in length, adorned with frequent little stone fountains and basins on each side, which fill your ears with pleasing murmurs, casting out little jets of water as you pass along.

On the turning a great cock above, at once such store of wind and water issues out to the great *girandola* below in the *grotto*, that it makes a perfect imitation of thunder, hail, rain, and a mist. Here is a statue of a centaur, which winds the horn which he holds to his mouth in perfect good measure ; there sits *Apollo* on mount *Parnassus*, and being surrounded with a circle of nine muses, form a symphony of wind music, while the thorough bass is played on an *hydraulic* organ.

From the *portico* you enter a large quadrangular court, in each angle, supported by ionic pillars, stands a statue of *Fortune* on the wing ; the action so just and natural, that they seem spurning, as it were, the voluble ball, on which they only seemed to have stood for the advantage of the rise ; for their motion was so lively, that you could not persuade yourself that they were fixed, but flying.

In the midst of this quadrangle stood a vast rock of white marble, cut out into various representations. The first figure, which fronts the gate as you enter, is the statue of *Diana*, a piece of admirable perfection ; her garments loose, and flowing and driven back, as it were by a contrary wind, discovered an action both lively and strong, and full of the venerable majesty of the goddess. On each side of her stood, or, I may almost say, run her beagles in couples ; their eyes seemed to menace, their ears stood erect,

their nostrils stretched out wide, and their mouth open with so natural a fierceness, that should any barking happen near them, you would swear that it came from these beagles of stone. And that which seemed none of the least piece of mastery in the carver, was, that as they were cut in the act of running, while with breasts erected their fore feet seemed perfectly to run, the hindermost, fixed to the stone, seemed to stop their career. Behind the goddess, the marble rock rising higher in the form of a cave, or grotto, was covered with moss, grass, leaves, and sprigs—here it was shaded with young vines, whose curling tendrils twined about the springing and flourishing shrubs, that fill up the landscape;—there the brightness of the marble cast a gloomy sort of light on the hollow of the *grotto*. Round the extremities of the rock wandered a charming foliage, from whence depended in clusters all manner of fruit, as apples, grapes, nectarines, and the like, so curiously finished and polished, that emulous art seemed to have equalled nature herself; while it deceived the eye into a belief, that some of them ripened by the autumnal beams of the sun to their just colour and bigness, were fit to be pulled by the hand.

Then casting down your eyes into the stream, that tumbling down the rock, seemed gently to glide into the murmuring flood fast by the feet of the goddess, you would find them so de-

luded by the happy art of the carver, as to be persuaded they saw the depending branches of the vines receive an imaginary motion from the current of the stream into which they hung. In a corner of this piece, overshadowed with leaves, you discover the statue of *Acteon*, curiosity and earnestness sat visibly in his eyes, while with impatience he waited the entrance of *Diana* into the fountain, disrobed of her clothes, and naked to his view.

Lost in admiration of these admirable wonders of art, my charming mistress taking me by the hand; *Come, my child*, said she, *why dost thou entertain thyself with the weak mimicry of ART, who art thyself such a wonder of its original NATURE. Come up along with me, it is time to refresh ourselves after the fatigue of our journey; you shall have time enough to contemplate all the ornaments of this Villa, during this month's stay here at Tivoli.*

Saying this, she led me up a magnificent stair-case of the finest marble, porphery, and jasper; the rails of curious brass work, and gilded with gold. On the walls were painted the loves of *Dido* and *Æneas*, even to the cave and the storm, which met us at the landing-place on the top of the stairs. The painting was strong and lively; yet the painter seemed to me guilty of a blunder, when in the various figures

of *Dido* and *Æneas*, all within our view, there was no resemblance or likeness in their faces.

Thence we past by the *saloon*, to an apartment allotted for *Theresa*, where, fatigued with the journey and heat of the day, being thrown on a couch, her maids undressing her head and lovely body, discovered such charms, that filled my eyes with pleasure, and my face with blushes of warm desire. Being near undressed, she ordered my gown to be brought, and me to be undressed, that I might be more cool. I obeyed her, but sighed to see her retire to the bath without me, leaving only to imagination what the waters concealed.

I had not been long undressed, and thrown on the couch more uneasy with the pain of desire, than the fatigue of the journey, but the maids coming out, brought me orders to repair to their lady, who designing a while to indulge her pleasure in the bath, had a mind to divert the time the more agreeably with my innocent prattle. I obeyed with more pleasure than I durst yet discover, ravished with the thoughts of being so near the naked beauties of my charmer, where my greedy eyes would be but faintly excluded from a full view of her person, by so transparent a veil as the water.

The bath was made of various depths, ac-

cordova to the person or use that was made of it ; on the farthest side from the entrance was a couch of marble, on which one might lie with nothing but the head above the water. There it was I found the charming *Theresa* extended at full length, with one arm thrown over her head, and her sprightly eyes full of languishing desire, while her face covered all over with a conscious blush, promised to the happy man that thus could attack her no obstinate resistance. Beyond this watery couch the margin of the bath is raised about two foot ; where she bid me lie down and divert her with some pretty story as I was wont.

Though my heart was too full of the charms that were so near me, to be pleased with diverting my thoughts to a story that was foreign to my wishes, yet I was not less inclined by choice, than by duty to obey her commands. Having therefore thrown myself down by her on the margin of the bath, with my hands folded in hers, I gave her the following relation.

CHAPTER V.

The history of the fatal loves of Don Frederic and Catalina of Toledo.

DON *Frederic of Toledo* was a man of admirable accomplishments of person and mind. He was proper, well shaped, and active; danced and sung, and rode with all the grace of the court. Besides these advantages, he had a wit ready and sprightly, and furnished with all the charming arts of fine persuasion, that might win those ladies to his pleasure who could resist the beauty of his person. *Don Frederic* had a country house in a village about two leagues from *Toledo*, whither he often retired in the heat of the summer to loose himself from company and business in his *grottos* and shades.

There lived in that village an old gentleman called *Sancho*, of a fortune broken, and a family not very antient or noble. However, *Don Sancho* having only one daughter, the beautiful *Catalina*, by his wife *Donna Elvira*, a woman of a haughty temper and family of quality, lived in this retirement with as much reputation and satisfaction, as a man could take in sufficiency, when he had thrown off all thoughts of *ambition*. *Catalina* was his only

comfort, and *Catalina* was his only care. How to dispose well of her in marriage was the subject of all his considerations. But being able to give little or nothing in hand, all her fortune lying in uncertain reversion, few matches presented agreeable to his wishes or her desires.

She was young and beautiful, tall, slender, and straight as an arrow; but had a heart more lofty than her person, full of ambition, self-opinion, and violence. The merit she had in her body was a snare to her mind, persuading her, that all things were due to her beauty. The gardens of *Don Frederic* were the most curious of any in *Spain*; so that when he was at *Toledo*, the master gardener gave free toleration to *Donna Catalina* to divert her solitary hours with so pleasing a promenade: and for her greater convenience, she had a key to a back-door, which was not many steps from that of her father's. No notice being given of *Don Frederic's* unexpected arrival, *Catalina* having wandered round the walks and parterres, was retired in the heat of the day into a lonely grotto, and there fell asleep. This happened to be the very place where *Don Frederic* used to pass an hour or two every day, when he was in the country; and hither he passed (the gardener being out of the way) without any notice of the family.

The couch on which *Catalina* reposed, was in a nich of the *grotto*, obscure by its depth, and the shadow of the banks, that rose all around it. A fountain that supplied a small bath exactly fronts it, in which Don *Frederic* frequently washed himself, especially soon after his arrival at the *Villa*. Prepared therefore for this he comes only in his gown, which soon thrown off he plunges into the water ; the noise awaked *Catalina* into a terrible surprise, which suffered her not to move from the place where she lay ; Don *Frederic* immediately came out naked in her view, again to throw himself into the bath, which was of too cold a nature to suffer him to remain in it above two or three minutes at a time. Having repeated this exercise about four or five times, rubbing himself dry, he put on his shirt and his gown.

You may imagine what a condition poor *Catalina* was in, to be found alone in so solitary a place, where she had no right to be, and at the opening her eyes saluted with a sight so agreeable, yet so unfit for the view of a maid ; and yet such, as could not be seen without admiration of the symmetry of the parts. What to do she could not tell, nor what course to take in this distress. To fly she could not, without passing by the very thing, she would not be thought to have seen. To stay there she exposed herself to his mercy, or at last to his assaults, which might

not be without some affront to her modesty. At last she came to a resolution of lying still, and counterfeiting that sleep he had driven from her by his coming, since this might keep her from his observation, or at least secure her from the imputation of having beheld what she should not have seen.

Don *Frederic* being now wrapt up in his gown, came directly to the couch where *Catalina* was laid, with her face hid with her veil, and seemingly asleep. Don *Frederic's* anger (on supposing it one of his own domestics, who had placed herself there to spy on his retreat) raised her something roughly, but she seeming to start from profound sleep, discovered a surprise and a beauty that charmed and amazed him. He made an apology for his rudeness in disturbing her repose, and she for intruding into his garden, by her ignorance of his being in the country, for she should not else have exposed herself to his censure, and her confusion. But he assured her that he blessed the indulgence of his fortune, that by so pure an accident had brought to his sight the most beautiful lady in *Spain*: nor could he suffer her to depart, till she had given him some assurance of another opportunity of offering her a heart insensible till then of the passion of love.

It would be tedious to repeat all the refusals, and struggles betwixt desire and honor, which

she found in her breast, or to tell you with what seeming reluctance she suffered herself to be compelled to sit a few moments to hear the amorous complaint of *Don Frederic*. His tongue and person were too bewitching to leave *Catalina* indifferent; and after an inundation of vows of constancy and honor, she allowed him the first freedoms of a fortunate lover, and in the midst of a thousand kisses promised him a second hearing. Thus swelled with vain hopes of marrying a *Grandee*, and pleased with the beauty of his person, she retired through the back-door to her own garden.

But *Catalina*, as wounded as she was, had not yet lost in the soft passion of love, the cunning of a designing woman, who would turn all things to her interest and advantage. She was too pleased with her conquest not to endeavour to fix it, and by the difficulty of seeing her she hoped to heighten his desire, and so win him to marriage, to satisfy a passion she had resolved not to gratify on more reasonable terms.

Frequently would *Don Frederic* walk near the wall of her garden, and with his voice and guitar make his songs plead that love, which was denied a more near and secret advocate to argue. He sung too well, and played too masterly, not to blow up the fire that was already too well kindled in the bosom of *Catalina*. So that unable to act a false severity any longer, by

a billet thrown over the wall, she appointed the next evening for a second interview in his garden. The time is come, and Don *Frederic* impatient waits ready at the door to catch her in his arms as she entered.

He was all on fire when he saw her, transported when he touched her ; and unable to support the violence of a passion which so much beauty had inspired, and so much cruelty hitherto denied the power of accomplishing. You may imagine nothing was wanting in him to finish the affair, and it was with no small difficulty she then escaped the fury of his embraces ; while force without, and treachery within had very near betrayed the garrison of her pride to suffer a storm, which else she might have prevented. But pride and honor rallying, drove back the enemy, while she sprung from his arms and run to the door, but not able to open it before he had overtaken her, she protested she would cry out unless he let her depart from a rudeness that had taught her to think of him no more, unless he could secure her of not passing the terrible boundaries of *honor*.

Struck with despair at an anger that seemed too sincere to carry any thing of disguise, he humbled himself to his knees, and with a dying despondence in his eyes vowed solemnly, for the future honor only should be the guide of his

conduct, if she would forgive his past madness, and continue the favor of her conversation. We easily believe what we wish, and it is impossible for a heart concerned in the cause to give a judgment impartial, since passion is a bribe too prevailing for any one to resist. Thus *Catalina* corrupted with the seeming sincerity of his vows and assurances, promised to meet him again the next evening. She kept her word, but would not be so confident in his to venture with him into any covered walk, or arbour, and he unwilling to alarm her fears and mistrusts, ceased to press what seemed so disagreeable. Kisses, and tender pressings of the hand, and stolen caresses, with vows of love and constancy were suffered in open air: which thin diet was all the food of his love and desire, till his conduct had given her confidence enough to venture with him anywhere.

These kisses and embraces, and the near conversation with the object of his wishes, were too warm to let his thoughts of enjoyment expire; yet he was so admirable a master of dissimulation, that he perfectly^a concealed all the eagerness of his passion under the gentlest pressures of her soft hand and kisses as modest as love could allow. Having continued this conduct now near a fortnight together, and traversed all the solitary paths of the garden, without any offer like those at the beginning of

the amour, she ventured one night into a *grotto* remote from the house, and out of ear-shot from any of the neighbours, being in a grove about the midst of the garden. There he had prepared a collation for her, and only one servant attended at a distance, who only served to give her the more confidence to descend into a place else so dangerous for two young lovers to enter.

The collation being ended, and the rich wine drank off, he ordered his servant to fetch him a bottle of fine cordial, absolutely necessary after so plentiful a *desert* of fruit. This was his *cue* to return no more. The servant being gone, and the table removed, he takes her by the hand, and so walks up and down, protesting how infinitely he was struck with her charms, that it was impossible to live longer without her; and that if she would not, with a barbarity too cruel for so tender a bosom, have him perish before her, she must not use him with all that rigorous reserve which she had hitherto affected.

Not giving her time to reply, he stopped her mouth with kisses and run over her bosom with fingers transported till for want of breath the struggling nymph fell back on the couch, where first she had seen this fatal Don *Frederic*. She bit, she scratched, she tore, and exclaimed; but all in vain, the eager cavalier pushed on his fortune, and now almost possessed of the fort,

she got from his arms ; but he soon recovered his prey, and with all the soft endearing actions and words assaults her resolution. She presses marriage, he makes no doubt of the terms, assuring her with oaths that on the death of his mother he would make good his promises, not being able in her life to dispose of himself without a fortune, but with the loss of his own. Pride, ambition, and love now unite, and she melts with his vows by degrees, struggling every moment less and less, as he multiplied assurances of marriage and constancy.

Possessed now of all he could desire, there nothing remained but to repeat the blessing as oft as he could. In the intervals of bliss, reserve being now thrown aside, in one of his ecstasies, Don *Frederic* sung this *da capo* of an *Opera* :

*Oh ! Love ! how pleasing are thy chains,
For there alone true freedom reigns ;
My torments past o'erpaid I find
While fortune smiles, and you are kind.
Oh ! Love ! how pleasing are thy chains !
For there alone true freedom reigns.*

Catalina who had no ill voice, and who was acquainted with music, replied with another near her case as she imagined :

*Ah ! how sweet it is to find
The lover in the husband's arms !*

*Choice and duty, thus combin'd,
Flow with everlasting charms ;
Ah ! how sweet it is to find
The lover in the husband's arms !*

The interview concluded in music and love, till the hours now summoned *Catalina's* departure, which was accompanied with tears, sighs, embraces, and promises of a speedy return.

This intrigue thus continued for the space of near half a year without interruption. But then *Don Frederic's* mother having provided him a wife of considerable fortune and beauty, it was as impossible for him to tell it to *Catalina*, as to prevent it if he would. But the fickleness of his temper, and the bribe of so great a fortune, soon put an end to the joys of the unlucky *Catalina*.

Though his absence grew tedious, yet the distance of their quality and the place of her abode from *Toledo*, and the want of a confident of her amour, concealed for a while his infidelity from her ; but his absence continuing, and his silence alarming her, she made some inquiry of the master gardener about him, and of him heard the ungrateful news of his marriage to another, and her own destruction. The gardener not knowing what his master's marriage was to her, was infinitely surprised to find her swoon away on the news. Being come to herself she excused the event, by assuring him, it

was a common accident with her, especially before any ill luck ; and therefore to prevent the ill omen, she would immediately retire to her father's house.

Being returned home, she retired to her chamber and gave a loose to the rage of her grief. *Oh ! perfidious, perjured villain, said she, is it thus you love me ! Thus you keep your vows ? And must you bear off the trophies of my ruined honor thus calmly, and without resentment ? No ! no ! Don Frederic, thou shalt not triumph over a wretched maid whom thou hast undone by her fond credulity in thy vows and oaths ! Nothing but thy blood can expiate thy crime : and that thou shalt be sure of from this injured hand. But oh ! I love him still, and how can I stab the heart I love ?*

*The rage of love is tender still,
Mingling sweetness with its fires,
The heart it may with fury swell,
But never cruelty inspires.*

I will therefore send to him, I will upbraid him, and if he be really so false will kill him. But sure it is impossible so many perfections should lose their lustre in perjury and treachery. It must be impossible ! Frederic must yet be true, and all my murdering thoughts have been unjust——

*Hope, the seducer of my heart,
Does gentler thoughts inspire,
And with a kind deceiving art,
Augments my amorous fire.
Hope, the seducer of my heart,
Does gentler thoughts inspire.*

Thus racked with despair, love, and rage, she long argued with herself, till too much convinced of her misfortune by all hands she gave herself over to her passion.

Though love had no small share in her distraction, yet pride and ambition had their part. She was in a rage with indignation at her being left for another, and robbed in a moment of all that imaginary grandeur which she had already devoured. Rage, despair, grief, love, hate, contempt, pride and ambition, made a medley war in her bosom at once; and had not fate preserved her for the punishment of her perjured lover, she must have perished on the spot. But having now vanquished a sickness, that had held her some weeks, she soon recovered her complexion and strength, with the thoughts of a speedy revenge, with which she would not so much as trust her father or mother; but admitting none into her confidence but an old nurse of hers, who suckled her in her infancy, she sets out privately for *Toledo*, where being arrived she is conducted to a convenient lodging for her purpose, by the venerable governant;

and there by her artful and flattering letters she prevailed with him to make her a visit.

The time being appointed she makes all things ready for his reception, and to give him a treatment the fierceness of her outrageous malice thought just. Don *Frederic* approaches with a graceful despondence, and answered all her reproaches with a temper, that would have abated the rage of any but *Catalina*. He avowed his love still as great, his desires far greater, and accused the cursed severity of his fortune, that put him under a necessity of obeying the rigid commands of his mother ; that he looked on himself as her husband, and should always respect her as his true wife, till fate more indulgent than hitherto it had been, should set him free to follow the dictates of his own choice.

Catalina too fixed in her resentment and revenge, took all that he uttered as false a dissimulation, as all his former vows and assurances had been now found. Resolving to encounter falsehood with falsehood, she seemed soon a little appeased, and by degrees seemed convinced of the weight of the reasons, and the necessity that had compelled him to do what he had done. Nay, she pushed her deceit to such an extreme, as yield to his embraces in false transports, when they were really more odious to her, than ever they had been dear.

Being therefore in bed, and after the dalliances of repeated desire had now left him fast asleep, her rage unappeased by all those soft endearments keeps her awake, and by the help of her nurse ties him down to the bed, and with a furious stroke stabbing him in the breast, she was not content with his death, without upbraiding him, and triumphing in her vengeance as he was expiring; betwixt every word giving fresh stabs, nor was the outrage at an end even after he was dead.

But this death of Don *Frederic* could not be so concealed as was expected by the actors in the tragedy, who were betrayed by the house, and his servant, that attended him thither, so seized and put to death, which brought *Catalina's* old father in sorrow to his grave.

CHAPTER VI.

The adventure of the bath, how Signor Fantasio got the possession of his mistress Donna Theresa, and what followed that success.

My dear little Cupid, cried Donna Theresa, finding that I had done my story, with what a manly air hast thou told this tragical tale. How sensibly didst thou talk of the transports of love, and all the accesses of its dissolving raptures, as if by some miracle thou hadst known what they were. Oh! my dear little miniature of man, that thou wert as capable of easing my pains as thy tongue has been of raising them! And grasping me with some eagerness on that sudden ejaculation I tumbled into the bath with my gown on. She started up at the accident, and caught me with her arms, to secure me from being frightened at the fall; and pulling off my gown and my shirt, threw them aside, and ringing the bell she bids the maids take them and dry them, and ordered me to stand still in the bath, which would do me no harm but refresh me after my journey.

The maid being gone she placed me by her side on the step to the couch, but kept her arm round, for fear I should fall any farther. As she gave me a thousand kisses so she suffered my

hands to wander wherever I pleased, which gave an insipid sort of satisfaction to both, though it only served to raise our mutual desires. I sung her this song, and used all the liberty she gave my seeming innocence to rouse up her wishes to their utmost extent :

SONG.

1

*Ah ! how sweet to see the eyes
Rolling in their humid fires !
When the nymph extended lies
Full of love, and warm desires !
Conscious red her face o'erspreading,
And her heaving bosom rising,
Milky paths to raptures leading,
Murmuring sighs her joys disguising.
Happy lovers only know
The bliss that from consenting lovers flow.*

2

*Listen then to young desire,
Nor with your pride against your bliss conspire.
Desire like a faithful friend
Persuades substantial pleasure ;
Like chymic boasts your pride will end
In meer imagined treasure.
Then sure the strife you'll soon decide,
(What can your scruples move ?)
Betwixt the sickly glare of pride
And generous warmth of love.*

I had scarce done my song when she caught me

in her arms and cried out, *My dear little creature, were the gods of old Rome still in fashion, I should swear thou wert Cupid, come to rifle my charms in the pleasing disguise of a boy.* I love you more, replied I, *than Cupid could do,* and pressed her bosom with my fingers as hard as I was able. *It is not impossible,* continued I, *for beauties such as yours to work greater miracles than all the heathen brood of imaginary deities. Which having given my heart so fierce a flame, may supply the capacity of appeasing its rage, which could not else be expected from my person and appearance.*

Infinitely pleased with the flattery, and moved by a strong imagination, she lifted me up in her arms and threw me on her bosom, when she soon made the discovery of the miracle I promised, finding me indeed sufficiently capable of easing both her desires and my own. Her wanton hand unsatisfied with what she felt, run over my naked body scarce yet convinced of her error, till unable to defer the joy, and unwilling to give her time to recover her surprise, I easily took possession of a fort that was not provided for a siege.

*Quick, and more quick her panting breath expires,
Her tongue wants force to utter her desires.
She left the welcome story to her eye,
Where humid fires were seen suffus'd with joy,
The sting of love now fixt within her breast,
Passive she lies, and waits the welcome rest.*

Having often repeated the effort to convince her incredulity, she laid me at last vanquished on her panting snowy bosom. *What dream is this* (said she in some ecstasy) *my charming little Cupid that I have had? for it is impossible it should be real. What pleasures, what unexpected raptures have I felt, which no mortal could impart? Thou sure art some diviner power transformed into flesh and blood to surprise us with joys, which without thee it is impossible for woman to know.*

After a thousand fond caresses and frequent assurances of my mortality, that I was a man of eighteen years of age and capable of answering her warmest desires, she seemed transported, the pleasure being heightened by the novelty, and charged me to keep my good fortune a secret from all the world. Besides, she assured me, that for the future I should be her constant bedfellow, secure from scandal and suspicion, by the false appearance of my person. She told me, she should now be as jealous and fearful of the women, as I had been of the men, and therefore her bed should be our security from both.

Now leaving me on the watery scene of her pleasure, she got out of the bath, and rose a no less charming *Venus*, from this little bed of waters, than the fabulous *Aphrodite* from that of the ocean. She left her warmer *Adonis* full of satisfaction, and pleasure in this fortunate adventure; and having dried her lovely body,

she veiled it with her shift and her gown, and went herself for the robes to dress me her darling. But my gown not being yet dry, she brought me a shirt, and my cloaths, and lifting me out of the bath, with eyes yet incredulous, she could scarce believe my visible credentials of manhood. She kissed me all over, and vowed she had never seen a sight so amazing, so complete and delightful as the admirable harmony of my parts and proportion. Seating me in her lap she dressed me with her own charming hands, she led me into the *saloon* to a collation that waited our coming, where with rich wine and viands we recruited the pleasing expenses of love. The ceiling was painted by *Guido Rheni*, and the walls hung with the admirable pieces of *Caratche*, and *Raphacl*, *Correggio*, and *Titian*, and two or three of *Bona Rota*.

During the month of our stay at the *Villa* near *Tivoli*, we took care to give our joys agreeable variety, and let no moment glide by us, without loading its downy wings with some pleasure or other. *Love*, *musick*, and *poetry* had their turns; and whenever chance, or company separated our persons a few moments, our thoughts were never asunder.

This was the *zenith* of my good fortune, and being made for pleasure, it was a folly to expect ought beyond it. I was possessed of the greatest beauty of *Italy*, just in her bloom, fifteen

winters not yet having passed over her head ; a lady of the first quality of wit. In the midst of the inquisitive eyes of mercenary spies enjoying the full gust of love in perfect security. I was courted by the men-servants, fondled by the maids, and blessed with the warmer and more charming embraces of my lady, her favourite confessed.

But all human grandeur and happiness stands on a very slippery bottom : while fortune takes a malicious pleasure by a capricious turn to whirl the minion of yesterday from the topmost spoke of her wheels to the lowest to-day. But of all happiness, that is the most frail that depends on the *various* humour of *woman*, and of a *young woman*, nay of a *young woman of quality*, the very *epitome* of all the follies and vices of the sex ; for their titles furnish them with the vanity of excelling all other women in lewdness and inconstancy, as if their *quality* supplied all other defects.

The month was scarce expired before I found a sensible decay in the violence of *Theresa's* passion, every enjoyment rendering her pleasure more languid ; while my flame rather increased by possession. But returning to *Rome*, the change of the scene gave a new edge to her inclinations, as acting under a greater restraint.

I was welcomed with no little pleasure by the old Cardinal, and the rest of my humble

servants of that family. To remove all my fears, Donna *Theresa's* importunity prevailed for my continuing her bedfellow ; for I was a little apprehensive of the attacks of his eminence whose flame my absence had rendered more violent.

Being retired with Donna *Theresa* to her cabinet, and all the company withdrawn to their apartments, having permitted some soft dalliances which I could not defer ; she opened her scrutoire, and looking out some papers, let fall a miniature, which I snatching up found to be the picture of a beautiful youth. When demanding with some concern who the happy man was, whose portraiture she admitted to her closet, with a kiss she assured me, that I need not be jealous of the original or envy his fate: for though happy in his *love*, yet he lost his dear life in the pursuit of his amour.

I pressed her to give me an account of the unfortunate lover, which she promised to perform on the morning's return, when sleep had refreshed her, and made her able to go through with the history. So to bed we went, where placed in the ivory pale of her arms, and on the sweetest bosom in the world, I revelled in pleasure, as long as I was capable of giving or receiving any joy. The low ebb of love being come, in the midst of soft kisses we both fell asleep.

The morning returning, I first escaped from

the image of death, and with kisses and soft caresses gently drove away the drowsy leaden god that too long usurped the finest eyes in the world, and having paid our morning devotions to *Cupid*, we slipt on our gowns, and went into the closet to satisfy my impatience to hear the mournful tale she had promised to relate. She took from her scrutoire the picture I mentioned, and several papers relating to her amorous affairs, and sitting down by me on the couch and casting a languishing regard on the picture, she gave two or three sighs, and let fall a pearly shower of tears, which added a new but a melancholy beauty to her face. I sucked up the balmy drops with the greedy thirst of love, and smothered the rising sighs with the fury of my kisses. When, *Ah ! my charming Cupid*, said she, *far, far be this unfortunate lover's fate from thee ! behold a cruel victim of these beauties, for which he fell in a most barbarous manner even in my arms. Not by my severity but the bloody revenge of my uncle the Cardinal, who finding him in my bed, with an obduracy unheard of, was deaf to all my piteous cries and prayers for his life.*

Here again she wept a beautiful flood, and fixed on the picture a thousand burning kisses. *Ah ! Madam*, said I, *you make me envy his fate who even beyond the grave can give you this concern. Who would not die to be embalmed in those tears ! and affect so inestimable a heart*

in so tender a manner? I swear to you, my divine charmer, by your beauty I grow jealous of that shadow, and beg your generosity to lay it aside; and if the original must entertain your thoughts, let it be by relating his glorious catastrophe; for to fall for the most perfect of all womankind, merits our envy more than our pity. How many Greek and Trojan heroes fell in the ten years' contest for Helen, who could never be mistress of charms so commanding as Theresa discovers in every part? While the cause that they fought for, and the valour she inspired, has given them an immortal fame among the demi-gods.

Thou sweet little flatterer (said she) I have done; the image of the poor unfortunate Casanatta shall rest in my drawers, while I give thee the tragical history of our amours. But the affairs of others being so intermixed with mine, that they cannot be separated without laming the narration, I cannot help mingling their pleasant adventures, with his, that are so melancholy.

CHAPTER VII.

The history of Donna Theresa, of her birth and education, shewing her to be the daughter, not niece, of Cardinal Cantelmi, her amour with Count Luciano, son to the Duke of Metalone, one of the Ardentì of Naples, with the letters and verses that passed betwixt them.

I MUST first inform thee, my dearest *Fantasio*, (continued *Theresa*) that instead of being the Cardinal's niece, I am his daughter. For while he was yet Bishop of *Fermo*, a ship of *Maltia* brought into *Civita Vecchia* a Turkish merchantman, which he had taken. Among the captives of this ship was my mother, a beautiful Greek slave, that was passing from the *Morea* to *Egypt* to her father, that was there a factor. The Cardinal happened to be in that port on some business of the Pope's, and had no sooner cast his eye on the beautiful Greek, but he was wounded with love, and soon agrees with the Captain of the *Maltese* for a price ; and having placed her at a convenient house in *Bononia*, he took such opportunities of conversation, that she yielded up her charms, and received the Cardinal by a kind of duty, as her master to her bed : from whence sprung your *Theresa*. A few years she bred me, and when she died

the Cardinal loving my mother extremely, took a particular care of the daughter, the only pledge of their love. Being grown up to twelve and he now Archbishop of *Capua*, he took me home, as daughter to his sister, and his niece. He spared no cost for my instruction, in all that was fit for a woman of quality to learn; and was so fond of me, as to give up the reins of my conduct to my own childish will. But yet careful of protecting my innocence from the treachery and surprise of those whom my beauty might inflame to the assaults of my honor; he placed as a guardian, or governante at a distance, an old decrepid, antiquated maid, who never having had charms enough to provoke an address in her youth, was as watchful as *Argus* to prevent the pleasures she could not enjoy in her old age.

She had a low forehead, beetle brows, great goggle eyes, high thin nose, and a chin that turned up to meet it, hollow cheeks with the bones sticking out like excrescences, a hunch back, swarthy skin, no breasts, but in their place two flabby empty yellow bags that hung down before, one leg shorter than the other, and a breath that would kill at a distance. Yet with all these defects and deformities, her discourse was perpetually of her virtue and the quondam conquests of her eyes, and the

resistance she had made against the most vigorous onsets of a perpetual succession of lovers.

Though this discourse were an infallible argument of her zeal for her sex, yet the vices, the falsehoods, the treachery, and the perjuries of man, was the peroration of all her harangues. The extravagance of her humour would sometimes entertain me, for I never admitted her but to divert me. For though her charge was to be watchful of the avenues of the palace, her commission extended not to invade my privacies within, or to raise any uneasy jealousy in me, that I was under any constraint.

I was now turning of fourteen years of age, and full as ripe for love as any of my sex in *Italy*, drawing perhaps an amorous constitution from both my father and mother. For those who are got in the liberty of desire, are doubtless more gay and more vigorous, than the dull product of the formal embraces of a husband and wife, which has given me a perpetual aversion to that imperious animal called a husband, who, as far as my little observation can lead me, seems like the dog in a manger, or the misers of the age, who fondly hoard up bags of gold from the world, which they have no capacity nor will to enjoy.

The Cardinal was now translated from *Capua* to *Naples*, and dignified with a Cardinal's hat,

which drew several considerable persons to apply for my heart. Among the rest I was persecuted with the addresses of the Count *Luciano*, son to the Duke of *Metalone*, who is no disagreeable person, as you may remember, having seen him at the church *de la Pace*, where I first was charmed with the pretty *Fantasio*, little thinking what a snake I warmed in my bosom. His person is inclined to the larger size of men, his hair brown, his face manly, his age about twenty-five, his wit allowed by all the virtuosi of all the *Italian* academies, and himself a member of that of the *Ardenti* in *Naples*. And had his address been any thing but matrimony, I believe he had been more successful. But that, which made him the more acceptable to the Cardinal, rendered him less so to me; ambition had a share in his satisfaction, while mine was only in *love* and *liberty*.

The first time he saw me was in the chapel of the *Domo*, where the Cardinal sung mass, and a great concourse of people were got together to see the miraculous liquifying of the blood of *St. Januarius*. It happened that our devotion or curiosity had placed us very near the operation, and to take a fuller view I had discovered my face pretty plain; which I presently found had rivalled the Saint in the contemplation of Count *Luciano*.

The next day I received this letter and copy of verses from him by a messenger, which I believe may be worth your perusal; for though I was not very fond of the votary, I had some regard to the victim.

Theresa thus gave me the following letter and verses, which I read to this purpose :

LETTER I.

LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT.

“ IF, Madam, you know your own charms,
“ which few women are unacquainted with,
“ you will not wonder that one sight of those
“ conquering eyes, should engage a heart so
“ sensible of perfection, as mine. I confess,
“ that I am not easily subdued ; nay I with
“ vanity boast, that nothing less beautiful
“ than yourself could give me any concern;
“ but not to be vanquished by you, is rebelling
“ against reason. Heaven has set so visible a
“ stamp of itself upon you, that not to adore
“ you would be a sort of impiety. Consider
“ yourself well then, Madam, and you will easily
“ believe my professions sincere ; and that it is
“ impossible to see you and not love you.—
“ But, alas ! if you should view yourself with my
“ eyes, if you should really know your own
“ charms, as well as I, it must be my ruin ; for
“ you then would be sensible that nothing mor-

“ tal could deserve you. Be like the heavens
“ you represent, and let *love* be your purchase.
“ If I might hope that I could not long despair ;
“ for oh ! I love beyond all human kind !
“ Peace has forsook my thoughts, sleep has fled
“ my eyes, and nothing remains to keep nature
“ alive, but the reflection on those charms,
“ that ravished my eyes from the miraculous
“ blood. As you are fairer than all your sex,
“ so be more just and compassionate. It is
“ more worthy the excellence of your beauty to
“ bestow happiness, than misery. Without
“ your pity I am the most miserable of men,
“ but with it I should not envy the glory of
“ crowns : but words are too poor to express
“ your beauty and my love ; and nothing but
“ experience, and my life spent in your service,
“ can ever let you know the least portion of
“ my passion. Disdain not therefore a love,
“ which none but you could inspire or re-
“ ward, and only I could receive. You
“ know your power, and you know your slave,
“ let your rule be as pleasing as your eyes,
“ and then I shall be fond of my captivity as
“ long as I am, Madam,

“ Your devoted Slave,

“ LUCIANO.”

In this were inclosed the following verses :

ON THE SIGHT OF DONNA THERESA.

*Thus once astonished stood the trojan swain
 (Confounded with the pleasure and the pain)
 When he beheld in the idalian grove
 Minerva, Juno, and the Queen of Love.
 But all these three bright goddesses I find,
 In Angelina's nobler form combin'd.
 Force, majesty, and every softer grace!
 Whole heaven's confessed in her diviner face.
 All round she darts the glories of her sky,
 Its thunder and its lightning from her eye,
 And where the pointed flashes fall, we die.
 I felt the bolt transfix my trembling heart,
 And still I feel the painful pleasing smart!
 I, who so long had arm'd my stubborn breast,
 And made the boasted force of eyes a jest;
 I, who could ne'er amidst the sparkling round
 Of earthly goddesses yet meet one wound;
 I, who through crowds of beauties pass each day,
 Surveyed unhurt the *ring, the *park, the *play;
 Where with design the haughty dames resort,
 To vanquish men, and make our hearts their sport:
 I by one single glance, and undesign'd
 The utmost fury of love's anger find.
 Revengeful Cupid there in ambush lay,
 Sure from those eyes to make my heart his prey.
 The sullen boy not with one wound content,
 In that one glance a thousand arrows sent,*

* In the original it is the Corso, and the Church, but I thought it more proper to make it English.

*Which made a thousand breaches in my heart,
And fixed a fatal shaft in every part.
From every part a thousand loves arise,
Strong as her beauty, charming as her eyes,
Hold Cupid, hold! I can rebel no more,
Thy royalty I own, confess thy power!
I never saw thee on thy throne before!
True, I have seen thy dubious shadow play
And gambol in the inoffensive ray
Of feebler eyes, the twilight of her day.
The doubtful light thy deity concealed,
And not till now was all the god revealed.
Ah! from such eyes could'st thou still speed thy darts
All would confess the sovereign of all hearts.
All would with joy, thy willing subjects prove,
And all would then be peace, for all would then be love.*

Having done the letter and verses she pursued her discourse in this manner. I took no notice of the letter, nor sent him any answer, till he had repeated the importunity so often, that I sent him the following *billet*.

My Lord,

I wonder at your impertinence, that to please yourself should take such a world of pains to be troublesome to me. If you think me fond of gallantries of this nature, I can only convince you of your error, by assuring you that yours has not found the way to be agreeable to me. I therefore desire you to teaze me no more, but

suffer me to enjoy my own innocent pleasures without any farther interruption ; which I believe you affect more to shew your wit than your love.

Finding me still, in spite of all his billets and poetry, very averse to his amour, he resolved on another course: and causes his pretensions to be made known to the Cardinal, who was not a little satisfied with the honor, assuring him of all his interest in the case ; not that he would ever force my inclinations, but would allow him a more than common liberty of access, to render his amour the more easy passage to my heart. I was not a little surprised to see the Cardinal one evening introduce him, nor could I be so much mistress of my resentment as to hinder an angry blush from spreading over my face on his approach. The Cardinal recommended him as a person fit for, and worthy of my love, and with a tone that expressed both authority and tenderness, let me know, that to please him extremely, I must endeavour to like the noble Count *Luciano* for my husband.

The Cardinal left us together. And though the treachery he had used in applying to the Cardinal to obtain, what his own assiduities and services ought to have gained him, made me resolve never to have him, yet I gave him as

civil a reception, as could be expected at the first interview.

The visit being over, I retired to my closet, and spent the rest of the evening in reading *Petrarch*, and *Guarini's Pastor fido*. Early the next morning I received this letter from the Count :

LETTER II.

FOR LOVE AND MARRIAGE.

“ IT is impossible to wait all this livelong day
“ till the evening (before which I am not to be
“ so happy as to see you) without conversing
“ with you by letter. For while I cannot hear
“ the most charming tongue in the world, it is
“ some amends to entertain the most beautiful
“ eyes in the universe. If, Madam, you could
“ really have any doubt of my passion on *one*
“ *sight* ; sure it is impossible to continue so
“ groundless an incredulity, after I have had a
“ nearer and longer view of your charms ; when
“ both my eyes and my ears conspired to let
“ your perfections of body and mind into my
“ heart by every avenue. If *one* could not have
“ been insufficient, yet a force so irresistible
“ joining must render me the most passionate of
“ men. To *see* you, is to view the finest copy of
“ heaven that nature ever drew : but to hear
“ you is to participate of heaven itself. If my

“ soul felt before the growing pangs of a love
“ newly born ; think now, and reflect what
“ must be the agonies I feel. To see you
“ without *desire* is *impossible*, but to desire
“ without *hope* *insupportable*. Ah ! too
“ charming and too cruel maid ! how could
“ you continue so long incredulous of a passion
“ too visible in my eyes, and too evident in my
“ confusion to suffer you to be ignorant of it.
“ *But you tell me you cannot love ; that you*
“ *will not marry*. Two hateful bars, I con-
“ fess, to my happiness, which, if I cannot re-
“ move, I must remain the most *loving* and
“ most *miserable* of men. But, Madam, sure
“ you cannot be sufficiently acquainted with
“ the secrets of your heart ; when in it you
“ discover no seeds of that passion. Nature
“ could never be so preposterous to make you
“ so every way for *love*, and yet destroy the very
“ aim of her fine workmanship by denying you
“ *love*. Is it possible, Madam, for any one
“ to imagine, who is not your enemy, that
“ you were made for the curse of mankind,
“ when we see you adorned with all those per-
“ fections, which only can make up this *bles-*
“ *sing* ? *Love*, my everlasting charmer, *love*
“ *is nature's voice ; the soul of the world, its*
“ *origin, and preservation*. Not to love, there-
“ fore, is an impiety you cannot be guilty of,
“ since it is a sin against nature, against your

“ own happiness. For she, who never loved,
“ never knew the greatest joy of life, its most
“ solid and most transporting pleasure. She
“ loses all the *fleeting* and *never again return-*
“ *ing* minutes of swift winged time in a dull in-
“ sipid circle of trifles, unknowing of the lively
“ joy of hearts united. You must therefore, Ma-
“ dam, nay, you will love, though you love not
“ *me*.—It is true, and I confess it, a true, sin-
“ cere heart full of you, and full of love is all the
“ merit I have to plead, I frankly own I cannot
“ deserve your person, or your love ; but then as
“ justly grant me, that those gay qualities, which
“ usually make the hearts of the young and the
“ unexperienced their prize, deserve you less.
“ *Love* has some claim to *love*, but those have
“ none ; yet even my love, though the greatest
“ that ever inspired man, cannot deserve you.
“ No, no, Madam, whenever you bestow your-
“ self it must be an act of *generosity*, not of
“ *right* in him that receives you. This opi-
“ nion, Madam, is sufficient to ensure your
“ happiness with me ; for while I must be
“ sensible that I receive you from your gene-
“ rosity not my desert, I must always be paying
“ a gratitude for a benefit I am always enjoying :
“ while he that is so vain as to plead his own
“ merit, will take you as his due, and so
“ exert a dominion which I shall ever be far
“ from claiming.—But since you must love,
“ my dear charmer, receive the agreeable pas-

“ sion as a *blessing*, not a *curse*. If you re-
“ fuse it when *young*, it will come on you
“ with double violence when you are *old* ; and
“ if you deny your heart to *sincerity* and *truth*,
“ it will fall a victim to *perjury* and *hypocri-*
“ *sy*. You seem apprehensive that marriage
“ would be the period of your freedom of *will*,
“ indulged to you from a child ; but how can I
“ ever think of opposing that *will*, to which
“ I must owe all that is valuable in the world.
“ No, no, dear charmer, you have too strong
“ an ascendant over my soul, to fear any
“ period to your empire but my life.—But you
“ say you never will marry—good heaven avert
“ *the infamous omen* ! Pray, tell me why ? Sure
“ you have looked on marriage through the
“ wrong end of the *perspective* ; turn it, view
“ it better, and you will like it better.—Con-
“ sider, Madam, is life worth the possession,
“ without a partner in our affairs ? joy is
“ imperfect while confined to one breast, and
“ grief insupportable ; this would be lessened
“ and that be exalted by imparting it to a
“ true friend. But where can a true friend
“ be found, but where interest as well as
“ persons are joined. How many trials are
“ every day made in vain among the *fair* for
“ this *phenix* ? But in the midst of their dear
“ *confidences*, levity, jealousy, interest, or re-
“ venge, bursts the *curious web* asunder, and
“ then all the confided secrets fall out in

“ their most hideous form and dress. But the
“ innocent and young, like you, are always
“ dealing with disadvantage ; while you bring
“ *undesigned* sincerity to barter with experi-
“ enced *cunning* and *self ends*, till repeat-
“ ed infidelities produce a rupture, and you
“ are at last taught, at your own cost, that
“ the friend you have still sought in vain,
“ can only be found in *marriage*. But should
“ you choose a male friend, though the corres-
“ pondence might be innocent, yet will the
“ censorious world never allow those tender
“ commences, wholly disentangled from the
“ difference of sex ; and desire first or last
“ will be sure to blow up all the fine *plato-*
“ *nic* notions, while those made an easy way
“ to more criminal engagements. Then fol-
“ low *satiety*, *inconstancy*, and a foolish repe-
“ tition of all the very same infidelities and fol-
“ lies an hundred times over ; and all to no
“ purpose ; for no true and lasting friendship
“ is to be found till *marriage* discovers the
“ agreeable secret, and at once comes in with
“ the quarry, which in the long chase we pur-
“ sued to no purpose. The benefits of *mar-*
“ *riage* are too many to crowd into this letter ;
“ but all centre in this—If you choose a man
“ of sense, and one that loves *you*, you cannot
“ miss a faithful friend, and an empire perpet-
“ tual. A fool is obstinate, and ungovern-

“ able, but men of sense have still been vassals
“ to the *fair* ; and thus far I can put in my
“ claim, that I shall never aspire to more, than
“ always to be

“ Your faithful slave.”

I found by his not coming that day some extraordinary business had taken him up, which, as I found, was a visit to his mother, who was suddenly taken with a desperate illness in her *Villa*, and expecting only death, sent for him immediately. But the next morning on his return he could not wait till his visit in the evening, and therefore sent this letter to prepare his way.

LETTER III.

“ *My adorable Angel,*

“ FOR you are too charming for any thing
“ *mortal*. I wrote to you yesterday, and though
“ I design to throw myself at your feet this
“ evening, yet it being an age to that time, *I*
“ cannot delay talking to you so long. As my
“ mind is ever full of you, so *I* cannot be easy
“ till *I* unburthen my thoughts. Ah ! most
“ charming and most cruel of your sex, what
“ will you do with me ? for it is only in your
“ power to dispose of my fate to happiness or
“ misery ; there is no medium, one or the other
“ must be my share. Why have you so many

“ beauties to destroy, and so little pity to save ?
“ It is impossible any man can love you more
“ than I, why then should you make any man
“ more happy ? You must, nay, you will yield
“ all those beauties to the arms of some one
“ who will not, cannot love you as I do.
“ What shall I say ? what shall I do to make an
“ impression on your obdurate heart ? Oh !
“ that I but knew the approaches to the tender-
“ nesses of your soul, that I might melt you into
“ compassion for him that sighs and dies for
“ you, for I cannot live without you. No, dear
“ charming idol of my soul, as I can have no
“ happiness but what you give me, so can I
“ have no other life but what you bestow ; for
“ what is *life* where there is no happiness, but
“ a torment and lingering pain which no man
“ of spirit can bear. Alas ! Madam, if you cannot
“ afford a reality, disguise your cruelty so that
“ I may flatter myself that you are not entirely
“ insensible—Ah no——be rather cruel as you
“ can be, than appear what you are not ; that
“ would keep me in the road of despair, but
“ this would shew a dawn of happiness, only
“ to plunge me into greater wretchedness. Let
“ me be rather all *wretched* than half *blest*. But
“ if you can afford a reality, ah ! keep it not too
“ long, lest the effect should be fruitless. Ah !
“ charming *Theresa* give me leave to live and

“ love, give me leave to hope, give me leave to
“ be as long as I live your faithful vassal,
“ LUCIANO.”

It will be too tedious to tell you all the progress of a love so unsuccessful, it affords nothing surprising nor various, a persecution of odious assiduities and attendance, unheeded vows and sighs make up the narration. Let it suffice to know, that in some months address he could not discover that he had made any progress in my heart. So that after a most passionate separation over night, I received this letter from him the next morning.

LETTER IV.

“ OH ! my everlasting charmer ! what will be
“ the event of a passion which I am not able to
“ bear, while you are cold and indifferent to all
“ that I say ? I know very well, that prudence
“ would teach me to stifle so unhappy an
“ affection, but how is that possible when you
“ have already got possession of my soul ? Yes,
“ yes, you have not only vanquished my heart,
“ but deprived me of all desire of *liberty* : I
“ am pleased with my bands, though I know not
“ how to bear them ; it is a torture to love you,
“ and yet it seems a greater to banish that love,
“ such is the powerful magic of your charms.

“ Strange witchery of *LOVE*, that when it
“ allows no rest to its votaries, it denies them all
“ thought of deposing the tyrant ; no, it rather
“ furnishes excuses for the slavery, and while we
“ are unable to bear the rigour of your empire,
“ compels us to make it more firm and lasting.
“ My love is already grown so much a part of
“ me, that life and that must have but one end.
“ Life that my hourly pains make a burthen, is
“ only desireable in hopes of your pity. Alas!
“ I cannot live without you and yet know not
“ how to persuade you to be mine. Those
“ advantages I once contemned as the quali-
“ fications of fools or *beaux*, I now wish as
“ agreeable accomplishments too often en-
“ dearing the fop to the fair-one. What are
“ you to me now ye bright ideas of imagination?
“ and you sublime disquisitions of reason?
“ what are you to me but an aggravation of my
“ passion ? why was I not made a gay thought-
“ less coxcomb, incapable of all the impres-
“ sions of *love*, and so qualified to gratify
“ all the tranquil emotions of my heart ? Could
“ I have less love I might have more gallantry,
“ I might entertain the most charming of her
“ sex more agreeably to the gaiety of her temper.
“ But the violence and sincerity of my passion
“ robs me of all the gay arts of engaging. Oh !
“ my adorable fair-one, pity the misery you
“ have caused, have compassion on the wretch
“ that you have made ; let me bless, not curse

“ the hour I saw you, and wish you less
“ charming than I think you. It is worthy of
“ your beauty to raise the distressed and restore
“ me to hope from the depth of despair. Oh !
“ no, I find it is impossible for me to move her
“ heart, as cruel as she is beautiful ; yet in the
“ midst of despair I shall ever remain your
“ faithful slave,

“ LUCIANO.”

I do confess, I believe the Count had perverted my resolution, if an accident had not happened which totally defeated all his hopes.

CHAPTER VIII.

The continuation of the history of Theresa's life, and her amours with the Baron Casanatta.

ABOUT that time came to *Naples* from *Rome* an old acquaintance and schoolfellow of the Cardinal's, Signor *Carpegna* and his lady, and in regard to their intimacy, the Cardinal's palace was their place of reception during their abode at *Naples* ; soon after a nominal relation from *Otranto*, in the country of *Barri*, named *Faschinetti*, arrived with his lady, a man of figure and quality in *Otranto*, and of proportionable fortune.

Carpegna was a jolly, corpulent old gentleman, of about fifty odd, fresh coloured, merry, and amorous. He had a wife very near forty, but who discovered more than the ruins of a good face, and which gave promises of kindness upon a little application. The plumpness of her person gave her a nearer relation to youth, than she could claim in reality ; altogether making a figure desireable enough to a man of the Cardinal's age, who wanted not many months of that of her husband.

Faschinetti was a meagre, sour, close designing man, turning all things to the bent of his own interest and desires. He was about sixty, and his wife turned of thirty, gay, coquette, and talkative. She was by no means ugly, and yet could boast no great pretensions to beauty ; yet had fire enough in her eyes to light up the embers of love in *Carpegna*.

Their age, engagements, relation, and living together, brought us to a frequent conversation ; and as the odd fates would have it, my eyes proved so flaming as to set the tinder of *Faschinetti's* old heart on fire. He all along professed openly his tenderness for me ; repeating daily assurances, that having no children, I should be his heiress ; he called me his mistress, and ever was fiddling about me. But this passed for a sort of paternal indulgence, and the extravagance of his real passion was so incredible, as not to be suspected even by myself.

- There was a young Neapolitan Baron called *Casanatta*, that had married *Carpegna's* daughter, who was at his country seat in the *Abruzzo* when the old gentleman arrived. But being returned to *Naples*, on notice from his father-in-law, he and his lady made daily visits to the Cardinal and his guests. Being all but myself married people, I had too frequent opportunities of conversing with *Casanatta*, both alone and in company.

Casanatta was of the tallest size of little men, exactly shaped in body and legs, the down just on his chin, eyes full and languishing, a delicate complexion, and hair that hung down to his waste: he sung with abundance of art and address, with a voice that would charm the dullest. His utterance was soft and piercing; his words flowed like honey, and it was impossible to hear him without finding a soft emotion in your bosom at every syllable he uttered. His humour was agreeable and gay, and his temper open and generous. But his wife was just his reverse; young she was indeed, but had no tolerable thing to recommend her, but the wealth she had and was like to bring, as the heiress of *Carpegna*. She was deformed in her person, and crooked in her conditions; reserved, censorious, envious, ill-natured and sickly: and one would wonder that so jolly a humour in the father, should in no measure be conveyed to the daughter. But so it was, and

his good lady only could tell how far she was indebted to him for any part or quality about her. But she was at rest with her fathers, and *Carpegna* possessed of another whose character I have given you already.

I could not but pity the hard fate of so fine a gentleman as *Casanatta*, to be confined for life to so odious a creature; and often wished him in *Don Luciano's* place, or that he had yet been at liberty to make as honorable an address. I found in me that tenderness for him that he would not have been so indifferently received as *Luciano*, though his suit had been with the same disagreeable view; for I thought the beauties of his person and those of his humour, would really hold out through the long tedious journey of matrimony itself.

Full of these kind thoughts for him, I was so happy to make impressions as great on his heart. He sought all opportunities of conversing with me that he could take without suspicion, and mutual inclinations soon made our short meetings more frequent. Several things contributed to the success of the beginning of this amour, at least enough to betray us to a passion which neither of us could much longer command.

The Cardinal was taken up in bringing about his affair with *Carpegna's* wife, and he

was too busy in pursuing his with the lady *Faschinetti*. But *Faschinetti* himself, his hands being free from any engagement, but what he concealed under the pretended fatherly affection for me, alarmed with jealousy and pushed on by desire, oftener interrupted our agreeable commerce than either of us liked. For when we had often been left alone by the rest of the company, he only remained to curb our inclinations, sufficiently known to each other by our eyes, though yet we had not had an opportunity to proceed to a plainer discovery.

But the Baron uneasy at this curb to our pleasures, let not this invention lie idle to get him out of the way. For as we were sitting all three together a footman comes, and brings *Faschinetti* a billet from a lady pretending to be in love with him, but was hindered by modesty from revealing her passion. In short, so many hints were given that seemed to lean towards me, that he verily and vainly believed the letter sent by me; and promised to be ready in the evening to go with him in the chair, as desired. I was surprised that I had lost the *argus* of my conduct and that the Baron and I were left alone, his wife in one of her good humours refusing to come with him; he told me what he had done with *Faschinetti*, to get this opportunity of telling me how miserable I had made him by inspiring a passion from

which he could hope nothing but destruction; but that it was no longer in his power to resist it, and it being impossible for him to vanquish it, he had given over all endeavours that way; yet that he could not leave this world without letting me know that he fell the glorious sacrifice of my eyes.

Here he paused, and I blushed betwixt anger and pleasure; the pleasure I was obliged to conceal, while false anger usurped my tongue and belied the soft sentiments of my heart. I forced a weak frown, and some seeming harsh words on his presumption of declaring so criminal a passion, so injurious to my honor and destructive of my virtue. That, since he knew no better how to make use of the innocent freedoms I gave him, I should immediately retrench them, and fly from so dangerous a conversation. He pressed my hand and gave it ten thousand kisses, begged as many pardons, threw himself on his knees, embraced my legs, and made such an assault for *pity* and *love*, that unable to bear the attack, trembling all over with fear and desire, I broke from him and ran to my chamber.

He was not so bashful a lover or so ignorant of woman, as to have his passion defeated by the first repulse; or not to understand the symptoms of love from my eyes and my blushes, and the tremblings he found when

he pressed me with kisses and tender caresses. He followed me therefore, and finding my chamber door open came to my closet, knocked gently at the door, which when I opened to see who it was, he rushed in and seized me in his amorous arms, and betwixt kisses and embraces would not suffer me to cry out. I must confess the opportunity was so agreeable and the lover so pleasing, and my desire so heightened, I could not resolve to deny my own satisfaction to punish the rudeness and force that I found so transporting. In his arms I sunk down on the couch, and with a faint resistance suffered him to gain a victory in which our triumph was equal.

After a little respite and a gentle accusation of his cruel kindness in sacrificing my honor, I advised him to retire, lest the governante should find him ; for though he had secured one spy in *Faschinetti*, yet the envy of the old governante might be prejudicial to our affairs, on which his life, and my reputation depended. *My lovely charmer*, said the Baron, *think not that I have been so improvident of this moment of pleasure, which could only save my life, and which I have longed for with all the impatience of love, as not to provide against that evil. Know then, that long since I have prepared my way there, by taking up her thoughts with an employment of the same nature. For I*

have in my retinue a frenchman called La Mime, who for a reward undertook to win her to his arms, and so lull asleep those watchful eyes that might else interrupt our enjoyments. Impossible, said I, it is impossible that any one can sink below the nature of man to attempt any such affair with a monster so confessed. The French, Madam, (replied the Baron) are a people that will undertake any thing for money; and I can assure you, the opportunities of waiting on me so frequently here, has furnished him with such means to make his address, that he has for some time been in possession of the peculiar happiness of her embraces.

I could not give credit, I told him, to his assurances, unless he could so contrive it that I should surprise them in the midst of their dalliance: which besides the diversion might be of use in the carrying on of our intrigue. He promised the discovery, and having improved the minutes his policy had procured us in all the endearments of love, I dismissed him till another opportunity.

CHAPTER IX.

A continuation of Donna Theresa's intrigue with Casanatta, and its tragical event. With the diverting adventures of those of Faschinetti, Carpegna, their wives, and the Cardinal.

BUT giving a cessation to the first raptures of our love, I must tell you the fortune of *Faschinetti*. The footman having got him into the chair, made him pass through several streets, alleys and lanes, and by different and bye-ways brings him back again to the Cardinal's palace, and stopping under a balcony ready with a ladder placed there for that purpose, mounted the knight adventurer to his exalted post of love, assuring him he would go and give the signal to the amorous lady.

The ladder is taken away, and *Faschinetti* left alone full of fond impatience for the pleasing encounter. He had not waited long before he heard in the apartment a voice which he thought himself well acquainted with. For he imagined he heard his wife in an amorous commerce, with one who seemed by his tone to be Signor *Carpegna*. But as he was attempting to look into the window to make the discovery, he was suddenly diverted by the approach of several people beneath the balcony where he stood,

which made him stoop down, to hide himself from the flambeaux till they were past. But, to his great surprise, they took up their station exactly underneath the balcony where he stood, beginning immediately to tune their instruments, which, when in order, one of the company sung this serenade :

SONG.

1

*Ah! bright Belinda hither fly,
And such a light discover,
As may the absent sun supply,
And cheer the drooping lover.*

2

*Arise my day, with speed arise,
And all my sorrows banish ;
Before the sun of thy bright eyes
All gloomy terrors vanish.*

3

*No longer let me sigh in vain,
And curse the hoarded treasure :
Why should you love to give us pain,
When you were made for pleasure ?*

4

*The petty powers of hell destroy,
To save's the pride of heaven :
To you the first, if you prove coy ;
If kind, the last is given.*

5

*The choice then sure's not hard to make
Betwixt a good and evil :
Which title had you rather take,
My goddess, or my devil ?*

After the song they played some symphonies on their instruments, on which *Faschinetti's* lady opens the balcony door to grace the solemnity and own the devotion, being told by *Carpegna*, that it was a sacrifice of love to her, but that either the pleasure of her conversation, or the haste of the musician, had prevented his attendance. On which he presently took his leave and went directly to join them ; and she then opened the door as I have told you, to accept the gallantry of her lover. But the door was no sooner opened but *Faschinetti* tumbled into the room, and his pious lady affrighted, cried out the *devil ! the devil !* which with the noise of the fall made the fiddlers all vanish in an instant.

Faschinetti getting up, was no less affrighted than his lady, who had fled to the apartment of *Carpegna*, where she surprised her gallant's wife and the Cardinal in a posture not very canonical, which confirmed the grounds of her former suspicions. But all things were hushed, and a mutual confidence made by a discovery of each others inclinations.

The first confusion being over, the Cardinal and Madam *Carpegna* accompanied her to see what the matter was in her room, which had given her this alarm and them this interruption. But fearing that it might be some thief who had waited there an opportunity of robbing the house, the servants were called up, who with

arms in their hands ready charged, guarded the company to see the adventure ; and I being called by the noise from my room, joined the brigade in the desperate discovery.

In the meanwhile *Faschinetti* coming a little to himself, got up from the floor where we left him, and casting his eyes all around, was amazed to find himself in his own chamber, but could scarce credit his sight, in the testimony it gave him of every particular thing, that should convince him it could be no other place. The hearing the house in an alarm, awaked him from his trance into a concern what course to take. The balcony was too high for the attempt of his escape by that way ; and being forced to take a sudden resolve, he steered his course in the hurry directly to my chamber, which he easily attained before our formidable posse could arrive at his apartments. Where, when we were come, we found no living creature but the paroquet, and the doors of the room and balcony wide open. The servants, by order, searched every nook and corner, but could find nothing at all that they sought for. But the Cardinal cautious of his own security, ordered them to look into every room in the house, lest the thief should have conveyed himself into some other place to perfect his wicked design.

The noise of this alarm made me run out of my closet and leave the door open, and a copy

of verses I had just been making on my lover, myself, and the happy moments we had so lately enjoyed, lay on the table. *Faschinetti* escaping into my lodgings and finding the closet unlocked, took the freedom to pass into it as the securest place from a sudden discovery or immediate surprise, and where he might have time to compose his disorder before the company could find him. There he found and seized my amorous ejaculations, reading them over with envy and content; for he was pleased to find that I was not impregnable; but fretted to the soul to think that any one had been happier than him. I will venture, my dear *Fantasio*, to shew you the verses inspired by love without the assistance of any of the ladies of *Parnassus*.

*Ah! how transporting do the moments prove,
When we're enjoyed by him we fondly love.
Who with an equal warmth and ardour fired,
Returns the passion, that his eyes inspired.
What words can paint the fierce invading flame,
That seized each fibre of my trembling frame,
When to my arms the lovely hero came?
Nor was the fire less strong, that warmed his breast,
Which he a thousand tender ways expressed:
His sparkling eyes shot flames of humid fire,
And his pleased soul was tuned to gay desire.
Close to my face his feverish lips he joined,
And with wild transport round my body twined.
Fearful of joy, yet willing to be pressed,*

*I strove awhile, then clasped him to my breast.
 Who can the raptures of our loves declare ?
 Ye gods ! how soft our warm embraces were.
 We hugged, we kissed, and at each amorous close,
 Up to our mouths our souls together rose :
 Till with the bliss o'ercome we died away,
 And for awhile in speechless raptures lay.
 What's all the pleasures of a world to this,
 But gaudy trifles and a shew of bliss ?
 Why are our lives prolonged to seventy years,
 Thin sown with love, but crammed with plagues and
 And since we only can be said to live, [cares ?
 When we to love our pleasing moments give,
 Instead of that long age of anxious time,
 Give me, ye gods, now in my blooming prime,
 So many minutes in Amintor's arms,
 Whose matchless form my ravished fancy charms ;
 And on his bosom gladly I'd expire,
 Like the rich phenix in her odorous fire.*

You find these verses too plainly confess the happy hours I had past, and in my own hand too perfectly known to *Faschinetti* for me to deny it. I was only pleased that I had locked up those which the Baron had given me, and made on me when he little thought of the success that he met with.

I

*Ah ! Charmion shroud those killing eyes,
 That dart th' extremes of pleasure !
 Else Celadon, the favoured dies,
 As well as him whom you despise ;*

*Though in this different measure,
While he with lingering pangs drags on his fate,
Despatch is all th' advantage of my state :
For oh ! you kill with love as well as hate.*

2

*Abate thy luxury of charms,
And only part discover :
Thy tongue as well as eyes have charms,
To do a thousand fatal harms,
To the poor listening lover.
Thy glories should like heavens' be
Concealed beneath the veil of mystery ;
For to behold them in full force we die.*

In our search we found to our surprise *Faschinetti* in my closet, and to my confusion, when I remembered my paper. He told us that, being just come in and hearing a noise, he had as he came up stepped into my apartment to see if any thing ailed me ; but being entertained with the pictures and books he had found in my cabinet, he had stayed there longer than he intended.

Having searched all the palace, and supper being ended I retired to my closet, and to my confusion found my verses taken away : and remembering by what *Faschinetti* had whispered, his looks and behaviour, that he had discovered the fatal secret, all my invention was employed to contrive the recovery of my verses, and to abuse him with the persuasion of his error.

The next morning he entered my chamber with an air too assuming, and just going to add words to his looks on a subject I could not suffer him to go upon, I began prudentially with him, and setting my forehead in an angry frown, with some rage I demanded my verses, wondering at his assurance of not only entering my closet, but of reading my papers and taking them thence. *You have reason, Madam, said he with a malicious smile, to be angry at a discovery which your honor is so much interested to conceal. But, Madam, it is in your power to have it yet a secret, provided you look on me with eyes more favorable to my wishes. You may easily believe that it is not one conquest that your charms are confined too; for the miracles of your beauty are not content to rouse the hot blood of the young, made an easy trophy to the impression of every face by their heat and their vigour, but they inspire a YOUTH into OLD-AGE itself, giving a fresh spring of desire in the autumn of life.*

I must avow (continued he without giving me time to answer him) that I speak by experience; for not all my reserve, the sullenness and severity of my temper, not the debility of my years have been able to avoid the terrible blow. And I bless this occasion, which has given me assurance that I speak not to a lady insensible of love and all its most soft and tender endearments.

Hold—said I in a fury, *Signor Faschinetti*; *this language is insufferable, and I must tell you, that though I am a woman, I shall find means to revenge the affront. I am obliged to your folly for the discovery of your passion and shall acquaint the Cardinal, my uncle, with your honorable pretensions, who does not use to pass over attempts of this nature as peccadilloes not worth the minding. Because by your rude intrusion you have surprised a copy of some verses which I have transcribed from a translation of Ovid by a member of the academy of the Ardent, you presume upon them to this insolence, as if they were my own. But, Sir, I must tell you that unless you immediately return my paper and leave my room, I shall seek a remedy less agreeable to your interest.*

I spoke with that assurance that *Faschinetti* was astonished, and really believing what I said to be true returned my verses and left my chamber begging a thousand pardons, and assuring me of all the modest respect of one who must own the highest regard for my good and my happiness.

But though the confidence of my action, the plausibility of my pretence, and the guilt of his declaration had cast a cloud on his understanding and given him a tumultuary satisfaction, yet the hurry and consternation being over, and coming on his bed to consider, fresh

doubts alarmed his fears and roused up his curiosity for a farther discovery. For several corrections and blots in the paper were evident proofs of its being an original.

This made him so watchful, especially of the Baron, that in spite of our caution he observed several conscious glances, which though no evidence of our guilt was some of our inclinations. He kept us always in sight, nor ever left us alone, which gave us both a mutual uneasiness: for our souls thirsting for a conversation more near and endearing than could be found in this constraint, blushes and kind looks were perfectly extorted from us. The pleasure of seeing each other and being so near together heightened our desire of a closer conjunction.

It happened that he was obliged to leave us a few moments to go to a visitor about earnest business, though with the utmost reluctance; we improved the fleeting minutes with caresses and kisses, exchanging our amorous souls at our mouths. He spared only time to tell me that I should retire to the governante's chamber, and that in a quarter of an hour I should be entertained with the pleasant adventure he had promised me; on which he founded the means of obtaining more frequent, and uninterrupted opportunities of a nearer and dearer conversation.

I retired to the rendezvous of these comical

lovers, and the Baron to *Faschinetti* and his company that he might not alarm him with any farther suspicions, finding by my account what had happened. I was scarce got into a corner of the room that was dark and obscure, when the governante and *La Mime* softly steal in, and without any previous ceremony of fondness threw themselves down on the bed, and in a little time I came forward and throwing open the curtains seized her in the fact. You may better imagine than I describe the consternation she was in, and with what struggles she endeavoured to make her escape ; but I held her too fast, while *La Mime*, glad of the relief, stole gently away and left us together. I reproached her abominable and monstrous lust, that on the very verge of mortality, sapless and dry, could admit the criminal embraces of a lusty young frenchman. In short, I said all in an imitated rage that a real one could prompt ; vowing that I would immediately tell all to the Cardinal, and have her discarded.

She fell on her knees, embraced my feet, begged with all the moisture age could supply her eyes with, and promised no more to be guilty. *Should I in my youth, said I, in the full flowing of my blood, be drawn into such a folly, you would be the first to oppose my desire, put obstacles in my way, or betray the affair. Try me, my dear lady, said she, I will venture the life you*

give me to satisfy your pleasures ; if any young Lord has pleased your eye and raised your desire, I will promote your satisfaction with all my industry and cunning.

In short, after some parley on this head we came to an agreement, and by the capitulation she was to possess her *La Mime* as long as she could, while I had the master. But the difficulties of my amour were greater than in hers, to whom age, deformity, and neglect gave a liberty of acting without observation ; whereas I had the eyes of too many to deceive, to bring my affairs about with so much ease. But the dear *Casanatta* had by his fertile invention smoothed the rugged way to our joys by this contrivance : he had provided himself with the habit and cargo of one of those women who sell pomatums, washes, paste, and the like to the ladies, for their hands and their faces ; in this attire the governante was to introduce him to my closet, which was the next evening effected ; where I held him in my arms without fear or constraint for many hours.

Now was our amour in its greatest tranquillity, while secure from all danger we indulge our enjoyments. This made me have no longer any regard to, or keep any measures with the Count *Luciano* who still persecuted me at my hours of retirement. I therefore begged the Cardinal, if he valued my repose not to let

me be any longer tormented with the visits of a man that was my aversion. The Cardinal could not deny me what I asked with some earnestness, but taking a convenient opportunity informed him of my sentiments in as soft and tender a manner as he possibly could, and desired him to forbear the visits for the future, assuring him that notwithstanding my severity on his account, he would do him all the good offices with me except a constraint, which he never would use.

About this time the old prince of *Ascoli* having some secret negotiations with the Cardinal, was more frequently at his palace than formerly. Which gave life to a report that I was the business of his visits. This rumour reaching the ears of *Luciano*, persuaded him to believe himself sacrificed to the Cardinal's ambition. Nay, he was told this amour had been of some standing, and that we had been some time really contracted.

He therefore resolved to retire into *Spain* and go to the wars against *Portugal*, but sent me this letter and these verses, before he left *Naples*.

LETTER V.

“ You may venture, cruel maid, to read
“ this letter without being offended with too

“ much of my *love*, it being the last I believe,
“ I shall trouble you with. That I have loved
“ you, nay, that I love you still with the sin-
“ cerest of passions, witness all ye powers that
“ govern our actions and dispose of our fates.
“ Had I known, Madam, that your heart
“ and your honor were engaged to another,
“ I would never have troubled you with the
“ pains and agonies you have caused. I
“ should have endeavoured to stifle so unhappy
“ a flame in its birth, and never have given
“ head to a fire which now I fear is too strong
“ for me to master. However, since it is im-
“ possible for me to be happy in your arms,
“ I shall learn from despair to banish all those
“ agreeable phantoms which haunted my
“ thoughts with the bewitching scenes of plea-
“ sure I never can obtain. I am, Madam,
“ very sensible, nay, I have a most terrible *idea*
“ of the struggle I must go through ; but since
“ like death it must be past, I must arm myself
“ with the strongest resolution I am able;
“ though *death* would be a thousand times
“ more supportable : that being but the se-
“ paration of soul and body, this the division
“ of the soul, the death of *love* ; an agony that
“ none but he who loves like me can tell.
“ It is no small aggravation of my woe to
“ think that you must share in my misfortune.

“ Pardon me, charming maid, I do not suppose
“ that the loss of so great a wretch as I
“ am, can be the least pain to your heart ;
“ but when I consider my happy rival’s impo-
“ tence and age, it is plain he can never adore
“ you like me, and you will miss abundance
“ of happiness which my zeal would have
“ procured you. Ah ! cruel and fantastic
“ fate, that ordains me not only to lose
“ you but to see you lost in the cold withered
“ arms of age ; to see all those excessive
“ beauties worthy all the changes of *Jupiter*,
“ confined to the grave, even in their blossom
“ of youth. Hear me, Madam, hear me, and
“ remember that you had an adorer that
“ loved you faithfully, nay, that loved you equal
“ to the vast extent of your merits ; that, when
“ he was in the midst of despair, in all the
“ agonies of an unlucky passion, in misery
“ derived only from your eyes, prayed for your
“ happiness without regard to his own who
“ thus implored heaven for you. May ready
“ success still meet your desires ! May the
“ sincerity of your friends prove worthy
“ the confidence reposed in them ! May
“ the charms of your body be as lasting as
“ those of your mind ! May no pain interrupt
“ your ease, nor misfortune your felicity ;
“ but as you are the most charming of your

“ sex, so may you be the most happy ! May
 “ your husband’s love be like mine, and since
 “ you are bound to the feeble arms of old age,
 “ may yours like the charms of *Medea* renew
 “ his youth ; or what is next to it and not
 “ much more possible, may you never know
 “ what *love* is, or may you think him as
 “ amiable as he must think you ! But should
 “ I follow the dictates of my heart, whilst it
 “ is pouring out blessings upon you, I might
 “ tire *you*, but never the zeal of my love.
 “ Having thus made the will of my dying
 “ hopes, I will trouble you no longer, but
 “ let them in silence expire.

“ LUCIANO.”

AN ADIEU TO LOVE.

SONG.

1

*No longer such a slave I'll be
 To eyes regardless of my pain ;
 Her cruelty has set me free,
 And broke the stubborn chain.
 Belinda, you, that make me sigh in vain
 Now give the cure by your unjust disdain.*

2

*Thou visionary bliss farewell !
 Thou dream of love adieu !*

*Too many are the pangs we feel,
 But oh ! the joys too few !
 Glory a brighter mistress I'll pursue,
 Glory can never prove so coy as you.*

3

*The din of war my soul shall wake
 And all thy charms remove :
 The wanton boy his flight shall take,
 And meaner conquests prove.
 Through fire and sword secure of fate I'll move,
 Safe from all harms, while I am safe from love.*

As he expected no answer so he set out of *Naples* the next day, and I was left without any molestation from that side to enjoy my dear Baron. But young lovers have never any prudence or mean in their enjoyments. *Casanatta's* public visits were now too rare and his private ones too frequent always to avoid the discovery of a jealous-sighted lover. The Cardinal was too much taken up with affairs of state or his amour, to give us much disturbance, and the governante who was left to watch over my honor, was too strongly engaged in our party to interrupt our pleasures ; but *Faschinetti* was too vigilant, and too full of suspicion and desire not to unravel a mystery we were not cautious enough of concealing.

He had information from his spies that almost every evening a woman was admitted to me under pretence of selling me perfumes and

pomatums, and that she seldom staid less than an hour or two in my apartment ; a suspicion too pregnant of the messenger of a favored lover himself in that disguise. This recalled to his remembrance my verses, and the silent language of the Baron's eyes and mine, which he had more than once interrupted. He was fully satisfied, that to let himself into this secret was the only way that he could ever hope to pass to his wishes. Having therefore intelligence of the Baron's being with me, the governante being securely retired to *La Mime, Faschinetti* gently steals into my room, and finding none there creeps close to the closet, with the utmost attention listening, and frequently putting his eye to the key-hole to make the discovery that to him was both painful and pleasant. Here he plainly saw us in the height of our raptures, and observed me with rage meeting him with equal fire ; while with mutual murmurings we dissolved in each others arms.

Not satisfied with this he listened to our discourse, and so perfectly unravelled the mystery. However he thought good to suppress his resentment and not to come upon me with too sudden a surprise ; gently therefore retiring, he re-enters the room with some noise, which warned us to put ourselves in a condition of not being discovered in any suspicious appearance.

The fardel was opened and we began to chaffer for a price, till he knocked at the door, which without any concern immediately I opened and proceeded in my bargain with the supposed female-merchant: he humoured the deceit and bought some paste for the hands; and as the Baron went out under pretence of kissing so pretty a young trader, had a full view of his face, which his disguise was not sufficient to alter so much as suspicion was to reveal. He had ordered him however to be dogged, and the information was brought him, that he entered a perfumer's and in a little time after came out in a cloak muffled up, so went directly to the back-gate of his own garden.

He said nothing till the next day, waiting the same hour for his approach at my chamber-door; but the Baron was secretly conveyed up the back-stairs to my cabinet. His spy brought him word the false merchantess was with me; so *Faschinetti* with his usual liberty comes into my room, but was stopt by the governante who was there, who told him I was busy with a lady of my acquaintance and would not be disturbed; he replied his business was earnest, as coming from the Cardinal, and therefore would not be denied. So he came forward to the closet which I immediately set open without any fear. As soon as he saw the Baron there again—*Ha!* *Madam*, said he, *I fear you design to interlope*

on the trade of the perfumers, since you are so frequent a customer to this fair merchantess.

The Baron pretended he had brought me a pattern of some new *Roman* gloves, which occasioned his given me this trouble so soon ; I told him I liked the sample and bid him bring me a dozen pair, and so I dismissed him without the least guilty concern. He was no sooner gone, but *Faschinetti* seizing me in his arms forced a kiss from me, which, when I resented, he desired me to be more calm since it was now in his power to ruin my affairs, and that despair might make him do things we all might repent, unless I resolved to be more indulgent to his passion and yield to him what I so freely disposed of to the Baron *Casanatta*. To this he added an account of all he had discovered, as what he had seen, what he had heard, and that he not only knew him by his face though in the disguise of a woman, but had had him traced even to his own house.

I was in some confusion at his discourse, but utterly denied the truth of his charge. However I thought it not amiss to seem a little more pliable to his dotage, and allowed him by degrees the liberty of kissing my hands, my lips and my bosom ; which was encouragement enough to hope greater favors, which he pressed with some earnestness, and added some force. But I pacified his eagerness with

a promise that he should not always sigh in vain : that the risque was too great to venture in that manner a surprise that might ruin us both ; and that he must contrive some way more secret and less dangerous to gratify his wishes.

Appeased with these reasons and highly pleased with his success, he retired to contrive the means of arriving at possession, without which he told me it was impossible he should live. His odious addresses and nauseous caresses, and his filthy kisses which then I had been obliged to endure, gave me a resolution of at once punishing his insolence and destroying the credit of his discovery on his disappointment.

His barren head could devise no way but what he had seen put in practice by *Casanatta*, and so hoped in the woman's disguise to pass the whole night in my arms. The night is appointed, and I am prepared for the happy rencounter. I ordered therefore the governante to conduct him in, and up stairs to my chamber. When he came there I could not but laugh at the very ridiculous figure he made, which bearing awhile he pressed my retiring with him to the closet. I told him the night had happy hours enough in store for the whole extent of his passion. It now being near bed time and *Faschinetti* just sitting down to

undress him, the governante by my order, came running in and told me the Cardinal was coming to me before he went to bed. I expressed all the concern imaginable for his safety and life. I assured him his disguise, which could not conceal him, was much worse than if he had been there at that time without any: he proposed the closet, that I told him was the place where we always retired; but looking about, as by chance, I discovered a great chest (I had ordered to be placed there) and advised him to get into it, for the Cardinal would not stay above a quarter of an hour, and then I would enlarge him into my arms; so giving him a treacherous embrace we tumbled him quickly into the chest and locked him fast in, and ordered porters to carry it to his apartment and deliver it to his wife as sent home from him.

The porters conveyed it with admirable dexterity, and found in *Faschinetti's* apartment *Carpegna* with his wife, and setting down the chest they went away about their business. I waited the event with some pleasure and satisfaction, finding then no small relish of the *Italian* maxim:

Dolcissima mortali, è la vindetta.

Revenge is the sweetest pleasure of us mortals.

The coming of the porters had a little interrupted *Carpegna's* affair; but now pushing

her on the chest he was very near possession of a happiness he had known before, when *Faschinetti* hearing what was going about, and being unwilling to be so near a witness of his own cuckoldom, forgetting his own pleasant accoutrements, began to make a noise, and knock and bounce at the chest, till he had beat one end of it out. This *noisy* inhabitant of the chest had frightened the lady so as to make her scream out, which drew myself, ready for the alarm, and *Carpegna's* wife and the Cardinal to the place of distress; our coming stopped *Carpegna* to see what the matter had been. We found *Faschinetti* just disengaged from his amorous mouse-trap. The company now divided betwixt wonder and laughter at his ridiculous dress; nor could I conceal my satisfaction or hinder my mirth at his disaster, which highly provoked him, though the company now visibly finding him out, joined in the laughter, while every one had his jest on his comical figure. His passion could not bear *Carpegna's* triumph, and threatened that moment death to his spouse. But half pacified by me for fear of a farther discovery of his attempts, he turned the raillery on *Carpegna*, and said that he was sorry his frolic had interrupted the Cardinal's diversion with his wife.

From this, words arose, for the Cardinal resented the reflection, and protested on *verbo*

sacerdotis that he was wrongfully accused. I enjoyed but a short time the pleasure of my revenge; for matters were come to that height, that *Faschinetti* resolving to leave the palace with his lady that moment, would not suffer me to triumph in his disgrace, but gave the Cardinal some hints that he was not the only sufferer in the honor of his family; and plainly told him that I had sacrificed mine to the Baron.

This put me on a necessity of telling the whole company the adventure, and his infamous solicitations for my honor, for which I had punished him in that manner. That his rage at a disappointment had made him forge so ridiculous a story. The governante was at hand to justify what I said, which rendered his sincerity so suspected that this evidence was slighted by the whole company. In a rage at these insults he threw off his habit and immediately left the palace with his lady, who found the art afterwards to wheedle him into a good opinion of her virtue, persuading him that all the circumstances only proved a villainous attempt of *Carpegna*; who soon after returning to *Rome* with his wife, left the Cardinal more at leisure to consider of what *Faschinetti* had told him of the Baron. Some circumstances were too positive to merit his neglect; and he concluded that he would never have had

assurance enough to attempt my embraces, but by some certain discovery of my adventures.

He placed some new spies on my actions, and so soon was informed of the frequent access of this woman. For the troublesome domestic spy being removed, we took the more liberty in our amour, and frequently passed the whole night unsuspected in one another's arms.

One fatal night, when tired with the repetition of our mutual caresses, sleep had sealed up both our eyes, death came and ravished him from my arms. The governante's chamber was between mine and the Cardinal's, which he entering with a dagger and dark lanthorn, *La Mime* on the noise leaped out of window, and breaking his leg was taken by the watch. But the Cardinal stayed not to examine that matter, lest he should lose the aim of his vengeance, the sweet charming thief that rifled his honor on my bosom. My chamber on that side was unlocked, as dreading no danger; so coming directly to my bed-side he gazed on us awhile, fast locked in each other's arms as in sleep; I first waked by the light of the lanthorn, and seeing him going to pierce the dear breast that I doated on, I cried out so loud that the Baron awaked, but not time enough to prevent the first stab, which though not immediately death, yet made him fall back in the bed almost drowned in his own gore. I seized

the Cardinal's hand, begged him to despatch me with the lovely youth. But deaf to my prayers and tears, snatching his hand away, with another blow sent his poor soul a wandering with the dead.

It is in vain to tell you the extravagance of my passion, not considering the naked condition I was in, I threw myself out of bed and begged death at his hands, and which I thought once he would have given me; but nature prevailed, and throwing my clothes about me he made me quit the room and retire to another apartment; and then ordered the body to be thrown out of window into the sea, that on that side beat on the walls of the palace.

It was long ere I could be brought to eat or drink, or bear with any patience the light of the day, much less the sight of the Cardinal himself. Who imagining that the place might still keep my grief fresh and lasting, he removed me to *Rome*; and here took a peculiar care to wean me from my sorrows by all the diversions this city afforded.

A year was now passed, and youth and other objects had thrown out a guest so injurious to my pleasure and beauty; when Don *Luciano* returning from *Spain* and finding me at *Rome*, by the Cardinal's permission renewed his addresses; and it was he who gave

me the *vespers* and *mass*, when his usual ill fortune threw thee in the way to his happiness. Not that I ever would have married him, but yet I might have thought so much due to his constancy as not to let him sigh always in vain.

Here she ended her narration, which was indeed very diverting by its extraordinary variety of events pleasant and melancholy. But the bloody *catastrophe* of the Baron gave me pain for myself, lest that should be my fate one day or other.

THE END OF THE FIRST BOOK.

THE
NEW METAMORPHOSIS;

OR,

The Pleasant Transformation.

THE SECOND BOOK.

CHAPTER I.

Containing an account of Theresa's argument against marriage; the terrible death of the Marquis of Ancona and young Bentivoglio her gallant: the intrigue of a grave matron of Sienna with friar Rinaldo: and of an old Sicilian physician's wife with a friar Minorette; the advantages of intriguing with the clergy.

IT was now time to dress against dinner, and having taken my repast and run through the pleasures of the day, the night returning gave me again to the dear arms of the charming Theresa, letting me into the brightest field of love, where without any check I might run my full career.

Thus night passed after night, and nothing but pleasure and *love*: till now she found herself with child and was not a little concerned at the discovery, yet she appeased all my fears with assurances of my safety when the secret could no longer be concealed. I pressed her to marry Don *Luciano*, by that means the better to secure her reputation and me. But she told me that was a sacrifice too great to make to my security, when there was no such necessity apparent. I asked her whence proceeded her aversion to marriage, which other young ladies seem so forward to embrace?

I will tell thee, my Cupid, said she, and I tell thee sincerely; I know myself too well to run the risk of a husband, who, when he has once paid his liberty for possession, lays a cruel extortion on the wife all her life for the transitory pleasure of a few nights enjoyment, ever after confining her delights to his neglect of her charms. I am of an amorous constitution, and should strive to do myself that justice my husband denied me. Besides, I cannot promise for my constancy in that case; I know not but I might be weary of him sooner than he would be of me, and then to be obliged to his disgustful embraces, is a confinement I never can endure or think of with patience. The lover's humours are subject to me, the husband's must command me. Nor can I ever forget the fate of a dear

friend of mine who married the Marquis of Ancona. She was young, she was beautiful, and stored with the little frailties of our sex. She was courted, she was won by the zealous assiduities of the Marquis. In short, she was married, and too soon discovered the change of her condition. His ill humours grew insupportable; his follies without number; his insolence not to be borne: no interval of quiet, till now she hated him more than ever she loved him. What then remained, but that finding no pleasure at home, she should seek it abroad. The church, the rendezvous of the young and the charming, soon furnished her with an object worthy her desires in the person of young Bentivoglio. By the help of her creature she soon gained her end; for he was too gallant a man to suffer a fair lady to sigh long in vain, and she too charming not to find a return. In short, they loved and were beloved; were happy, and so had remained, had it not been for the cruel impertinence of the husband, who, though he found no delight in her himself, nor could afford her any pleasure, enviously denied any other the possession of what he could not enjoy. A discovery is made of the intrigue; the unfortunate *lovers* found in the fact; the gallant presently seized, and the wife and the assistant of her amour forced to strangle the unlucky *Bentivoglio*. Then with the dead body of her

lover they were both immured between the stone walls, and she perished by degrees on the cold bosom of her gallant. And this barbarous murder with our wise magistrates met with no punishment, but was highly applauded as an exact piece of justice.

Who then would marry to give up her liberty and all her delights to the will of a man that will have no regard to them? No, no, the Cardinal is too fond of me to hurt me for whatever liberty I shall fancy to take; and all the care that remains on me is to secure the person that administers to my pleasure.

The fate of the Marchioness of *Ancona*, I confess (said I) my adorable mistress, is an instance too melancholy of the tyranny of husbands, but it must certainly be the ill conduct of the wives who suffer such discoveries, or want of address in wheedling the foibles of their lords: for every man has his blind side and folly, which managed with discretion a woman may easily turn to her pleasure and security. Their humour, temper, circumstances, inclinations, passions, every thing affords a woman of judgment the means of her satisfaction, with no more hazard than would serve to heighten the enjoyment. This is plain from the following story:

There was a woman near *Florence* the fair, who, after a long intrigue, was in bed with her gallant when her husband was knocking at

the door. But having presence of mind in this strait, she clapped her lover under the bed and immediately ran to let in her cuckold, whose entrance she received with the small shot of her tongue, for venturing home at a time when the serjeants were in the house in search of his person. The *wittol* surprised at the imagined disaster, begged her advice what was to be done the gates of the town being already shut up : after a little pause—*Come make haste*, said she, *and slip softly into the dovecot, there only I believe you can be with safety, that having been searched by them already.* On all the wings of fear he mounted the ladder, which the wife of his bosom as speedily removing returned to her lover, whom, to frighten her husband the more, she made act the serjeant, and then retire with her to bed without fear of interruption ; in the morning dismissing him with security and joy.

But if the gallant be of the church, a very bungler may give loose to her wishes without apprehension ; as will plainly appear from the following adventures :

A sober matron of *Sienna* had an intrigue with a good jolly friar called *Rinaldo*, of so long a continuance that one would think they should not have been so greedy as to run the risk of any discovery. It happened however,

that while the friar was with her and his companion overhead with the maid, her husband unexpectedly comes thundering at the door and made her cry out she was undone. But recollecting her thoughts, she bid the friar dress himself with all speed, and he should see how cleverly she would bubble her husband. And having given him instructions what part he was to play in this pageant, she ran to the door and let in her husband, having laid the child in the place where she and the friar had been dallying. *Oh! my dear*, said she, *I had little thought of seeing this hour, that we should be in danger of losing our little son and heir! but had not it been for friar Rinaldo, (whom the Lord sent hither in the critical minute) I am certain we never had seen the dear little creature again.* The husband with some concern desired her tell him what the matter was, and what the child ailed. *Alas! my dear husband*, (replied the cunning gipsy) *at first I was almost dead myself to see the poor child swoon away in the manner he did, for I thought he immediately would have given up the ghost, nor could I tell what in the world to do. When, at that very instant, friar Rinaldo came in, and taking the sweet babe in his arms, said gossip, the child is sick of the chest worms, which gnaw on his stomach and will be his death, unless I exorcise them in such a manner that I'll warrant I*

*will cure him and leave him as well as ever he was in his life when I go hence. And because we wanted you to say certain prayers and you were not to be found, he prevailed with his companion to go up overhead, and say them according to order. Friar Rinaldo and I having shut ourselves into the room, because none but the mother and the child must be present at this mystery, which obliged me to let you wait so long at the door. The child I believe is still in the friar's arms, and if his companion had but finished his prayers all would be over, the boy being perfectly recovered already. The simple cuckold bamboozled with this story, fetching many a deep sigh from his heart, desired to see the poor infant; but she stopped him with assurance that his going in would spoil all the cure; that she would see if the operation were over, and then call him to the joy. The friar by this means had time to dress him at leisure, and hearing what she had said, called out aloud: *Do I not hear your husband?* he replying yes, very demurely, the friar having composed himself to much gravity, bid him come in, and thus with a solemn sanctified countenance addressed himself to him: *Here take your little son, whom by the help of St. Ambrose I have perfectly recovered, though when first I saw him I could not believe he could have lived till night. Therefore hear me, good**

Sir, you must set up a waxen image of your child's bigness before the image of St. Ambrose, through whose merits this favor is bestowed on your family. The father then taking up the child in his arms as if he had raised him out of his grave, began to kiss him, and to thank the good friar for the wonderful cure. In the meantime friar *Rinaldo's* companion (that he might play his part in this farce which he had heard) came down stairs, and told father *Rinaldo* that he had said the four prayers he had enjoined him. Which done the poor husband made them a banquet, with store of preserves and other sweetmeats, and the best of his wine; and waiting on them out of the house with a great deal of devotion, recommended his family to *St. Ambrose* by the prayers of good friar *Rinaldo*, and causing his child's image immediately to be made in wax, set it up before the image of *St. Ambrose*, as a testimony of the miracle.

The young wife of an old physician called *Agatho*, in *Messina* in *Sicily*, made choice of a brisk friar *Minorette*, for her confessor. And in her confession she took care to discover her mind in some measure, and her gay inclinations to supply the defects of matrimonial duty in her husband, and that she longed for a change of pasture where she might find some better feeding. Before he gave her absolution he enjoined her

the next day to feign herself ill of fits of the mother (to which she was subject) when the doctor was gone out to visit his patients ; and call on St. *Bernardine* and his relics for her cure. She followed his instructions, and this *Mino-rette* was intreated to bring the Saint's relics and apply them to the patient. The friar finding his plot succeed so well, came near the bed to her, and seeing too many witnesses in the room, told them he must begin the operation with holy confession, which was enough to make the whole company withdraw, so that there only remained his companion and the gentlewoman's maid. The company removed, the maid and the mistress found other work to do than confession. In the midst of their employment, who should come home but the poor old physician, not giving the friar time to slip on his breeches, but just to leap out of bed. But finding these two father confessors so near his wife, he began to scratch his head where it did not itch, not daring to speak what he thought. But that which most aggravated his woe, he found the friar's breeches under his wife's pillow ; but she presently preventing his resentment, said, sweet husband, because the relics of the blessed St. *Bernardine* have recovered me, I desired the good father to leave them with me, fearing a relapse. The friar being informed by the maid of the trick her

mistress had put on her husband, resolving to make the catastrophe of a piece with the comedy, returned with crosses, and bells, and singing, with the prior of the fraternity, and the chief of the convent in procession, to fetch home his breeches. And taking them out of a fair linen cloth (in which the poor sick soul had wrapped them) he made all the bystanders, the cuckold and all, to kiss them, and having laid them up in a shrine, carried home this wonderworking relic in triumph.

In short, Madam, all that can be desired by a woman of pleasure in a gallant, may be found in an ecclesiastical lover. The church has taken care that they shall be everyway agreeable, in excluding all *eunuchs* and deformed from the clergy. And as they are so well qualified in person, so their character obliges them to have some regard to decorum and secrecy, and furnishes opportunity and security.

Theresa listened very attentively to what I said, but I was not then sensible that I was pleading against my own interest, in offering her a new view of intrigue which yet she had not experienced, and so agreeable to the fickle inconstancy of her nature. But I soon found I had not preached to the deaf, or advanced a doctrine to a scholar incapable of what I taught.

CHAPTER II.

Theresa's amour with a Dominican friar, and the pleasant ill luck of the friar's attempts puts an end to the affair. Fantasio's fears for himself from her inconstancy and the Cardinal's brutal love to him, prevails with him to make his escape in woman's clothes.

THERE is a monastery of Dominicans in Rome, not a little celebrated and frequented for the fraternity of the rosary of the blessed Virgin ; at which church Donna *Theresa* very often paid her devotions. Among the many jolly priests of this house, she had cast her eye upon one every way qualified for her design. He was young, strong, and handsome, his colour fresh, his eye black and full, lips ruddy, and teeth white as ivory. On this *friar* she fixed first for her confessor, by that means letting him into the secret of her inclinations. As she was extremely beautiful and formed to give pleasure in its height, so nature had given her an appetite capable of receiving all the satisfaction and transports of enjoyment in their utmost extent, and as the *friar's* person was sufficient to raise great desires in a person of her amorous constitution, so he promised an ability of fully gratifying what he raised.

Theresa was not satisfied with a mere infide-

lity to me, but imposed the odious task on me of accomplishing her falsehood, to whom she was yet too dear to let me be indifferent in such an employment.

Fantasio (said she one day) *do you love me? You might as well ask me (replied I) whether I loved happiness, honor, and the greatest pleasure a man is capable of receiving? Is it possible for any one to see you, and not love you? Is it possible for any man to possess such charms, and not be infinitely fond of you? Yes, Madam, assure yourself that I can love nothing like you, and that in comparison of you, life itself is less desirable.*

But, Fantasio (resumed she again) do you love me for my sake or your own? I must confess, Madam, (returned I) my own satisfaction has been so mingled in my fortunate passion, that it is a difficult matter in what is past to separate you from myself, but if you would put my love for you to the test, command me to do anything where my life may be in competition with your will.

I am willing to believe you, (said she) but a proof would confirm that belief grounded on more than mere inclination. If you love me more than yourself you will promote my pleasure in opposition to your own. In confidence therefore of the truth of your professions, I shall now make trial of their reality. Know then! I have seen a man who has made an impression

on my heart, and without the possession of whom I am perfectly miserable. I have no body I can trust in the important secret but yourself. He knows my inclinations and feels the same desires, and opportunity alone is wanting to make me mistress of all my wishes. Now you alone must be the obliging instrument of my satisfaction. Why do you start at the only way you can convince me that you love me? Ah! Madam, (said I with a deep sigh) what have I done to provoke your indignation so far as to command me the only thing in which I can disobey you. For this is to destroy the very being of my happiness, and giving a certain proof that I do not love you: for how can a man that loves endeavour the delivering her whom he loves into the arms of another?

Impotent in her desires she could not bear my refusal, but with a thousand reproaches told me that she would employ somebody else, while the secret should die with me under her resentment, by making a discovery of me to the Cardinal. I was struck dumb with terror, and immediately reflecting that being employed in the affair I might find means of secretly disappointing the success, and to secure myself till I could find some way of making my escape from a family where I could expect nothing but continual fears, and certain ruin in the end; after a pathological reproach of her incon-

stancy and vows of my love and fidelity, I assured her that her pleasure alone could engage me, for life was no longer valuable since I had lost her heart.

She taking my compliance on any consideration sufficient for her use, ordered me to go to the friar and appoint him to come the following night about twelve, and assure him that a ladder of ropes should be let down for him out of the adjacent window on which he should mount to happiness. I obeyed, and found the friar transported at the assignation. But I took care before I came home to engage two or three friends to be near the place at the hour appointed, yet so concealed that they should not hinder the friar from beginning to mount the ladder. And so I returned home with my ladder of ropes, which I procured, and hid till the hour of action.

Every thing being thus in order for his reception, it is impossible to express the impatience of *Theresa* for his arrival. I was at my post, let down the ladder at the signal, and held the end fast in the window. The friar having fixed the end in the street was mounting three or four steps, when my friends punctual to their agreement, pretend to stumble at the foot of the ladder, and then to seize the friar as a thief attempting the Cardinal's palace. The noise was my *cue* and I let go the ladder, down tumbles the priest, and in his fall

beats my two friends to the ground, and so being uppermost, nimbly leaps up first, and chose to trust to his heels for his safety. They were not long after him, and pursued him so close that he was forced to take shelter in the public *privy*, nor thinking himself there secure, throws himself into it, which falling into the common-sewer, through all that filth he made his way to the *Tiber*, and so his pursuers lost scent of him.

In this woful pickle our ecclesiastical lover got to the monastery, and soon to his bed. *Theresa* was too uneasy at the adventure not to send me the next morning to know what was become of him. I found him in a most lamentable condition, and he gave me an account of his narrow escape in all its circumstances. I found a secret satisfaction at his ill fortune, but gave my lady a faithful relation of all he had told me, which though it gave her a sensible affliction, yet bated not a whit of her inclination to attempt that satisfaction which now had been disappointed.

It was some time, ere the good friar had recovered this scurvy adventure so far as to be able to make another assignation, and being now well again, there seemed too much hazard in whoring abroad, and therefore he appoints the rendezvous at home in the sacristy of his monastery, ordering her to be the next night at the festival of the *rosary*, and to place herself incog-

nito in that part of the church next the sacristy, which he knew would be pretty well crowded, and he would find means for her retiring from the crowd without any notice, and then with more security they might finish their loves.

I was to attend her at the sacristy door and not to appear in the church, whence she easily retreated to the field of battle. I saw her go in with a heavy heart, but without any means of disappointing them again. To discover it I durst not, nor appear to have any hand in any delay of their cursed satisfaction ; patience was all the remedy I had, and venting secret curses on the priest and *Theresa*. But while these melancholy reflections took up my thoughts, chance and the priest's folly were more my friends than I expected ; for of a sudden I heard the voice of a woman in a passion too loud for the place and the time. My surprise was scarce over when I heard the door open, and saw my lady come out in much haste veiled, and pursued by another woman, whose violence was restrained by the force of the friar's arms. My lady and I made all our speed away, and by the most secret and roundabout streets got home safe.

Being come to herself and now in security, she told me she was disappointed by a very odd accident and the heedlessness of the friar, who had appointed her his usual rendezvous with another woman, who waiting as she often had

done before for his retiring to do her justice, was in an obscure corner fallen asleep ; but the friar proceeding to the cause of the meeting, threw her head into the expecting lady's lap, which waked her from her sleep into rage, and that occasioned that noise, and her flight from the virago she durst not encounter, for she was not a little moved at the friar's infidelity, but had sufficiently avenged it on *Theresa*, had not the friar interposed. *And this, my dear Fantasio*, said she, *I take to be a judgment on my falsehood to thee.* I could not but shew my satisfaction at that thought, and in vigorous embraces endeavoured to regain a heart that was of too volatile a nature to be long preserved. She never expressed so much fire in the opening of our amour as she discovered that night, and I lost all my former disquiets in her arms.

But the heat of desire being over and finding her grow every day bigger and bigger, I had serious thoughts of securing myself by a speedy escape. But that which hastened the execution of my design, was the strait I was in by the Cardinal's addresses, which had reduced me to that, that I must feel the weight of his resentment, or yield to the gratifying his infamous lust the next night.

I always had the liberty of *Theresa's* closet and wardrobe, and being pretty well furnished with the money I had got in this service, she

having left me alone to go about some affair in which she had no occasion for me, I found a suit of her's of two years standing that fitted me very well. Having that day provided horses (for I would not venture with the *Procaccio* or a *Vetturino*) for the next morning, I dressed myself in women's apparel, and taking my money I got out of *Rome* as soon as the gate was open, taking my road directly to the province of *Barri*, where I had a relation who would take care of me till I got to some other part of the world.

My fears made me hasten my journey, and we rode very hard till coming near the *Appenines* in the *Abruzzo* we saw a party of horse almost crossing our road at some distance, but I little thought they were banditti, as we afterwards found them.

CHAPTER III.

Of Signor Fantasio's being taken by the banditti, and the adventure of the two Franciscan friars, who were severely whipped and turned out of doors naked, for using the fair ladies their host had provided for them.

My guide was not so ignorant as myself, but as yet uncertain of the truth made a halt, and told me he was afraid they would prove a gang of banditti. Their confused and irregular march, as well as their dress, persuaded us that they were no soldiers, and yet we plainly discovered that they were armed not only with swords and pistols, but with fusees. This growing every moment more plain, my guide wheeled about, and turning his horse towards *Portello* and *Rome*, advised me to follow him with my utmost speed. Not staying for my answer, but setting spurs to his horse he never looked back till he was out of sight. But I was too much distracted between two such extremes, to fix with resolution on either; so losing my guide, with an easy but unwilling gallop I followed at a distance. I could not but dread falling into the hands of the Cardinal, when I reflected on the lamentable fate of *Casanatta*; on the other hand, the present danger was too

terrible to suffer me to be indifferent. In the midst of this distraction I came to a by-road that turned off from the direct way to *Rome*, and in all probability might enable me to escape this gang of banditti. Whipping, therefore, my horse with all my force and strength, I made all the speed forward I could, till hearing myself pursued with the sound of many horses, I kept on my pace till I found myself surrounded with half a score banditti, who seizing my horse and rifling my pockets, commanded me to go with them without more ado, assuring me that, if I attempted to make my escape, they would send such a volley of bullets along with me, as should soon put a stop to my journey.

I gave them all the fair words in the world, and hoped as they were men of honor, they would have some regard to my sex and content themselves with what I had, without acting any thing to the prejudice of my virtue or safety. The mode and matter of my clothes were too fashionable and rich, not to inspire them with the hope of a considerable ransom for my person, as promising a woman of the first figure and quality. They therefore assured me, that I might be as easy as in my own house, my virtue and life being not what they sought, but the money which I must procure for my liberty. Unable to appease this first frown of fortune, I bore it with a patience that made my captivity

easy, and according to their command, I rode briskly on with them as gay and good humoured as if nothing had happened.

We had not travelled far towards the foot of the *Appenines*, but coming into a wild solitary thicket, we, at a little distance, discovered two men lying extended beneath an olive shade, stark naked and all bloody, though visibly alive. One of the company rid up full speed to hinder their escape till we got up to them, being willing to know the cause of their condition. We soon found by their shaved heads they were a brace of jolly *Franciscans*, one about five and twenty, the other near forty. On our inquiry how they came into that woful condition, the elder assured us that they had been set upon by robbers, spoiled of their habits, and whipped in that manner because they had no money. When the other still lying on his belly cried out, Why dost thou add a lie to thy other crimes, into which thou hast drawn the frailty of my youth?

This contradiction between the friars raised their curiosity to hear the truth of the story, which on some importunity and adding some threats, the younger friar thus began to relate:

Within a few miles of this place there lives an impious knight in a solitary castle, fit for the darkness of his crimes and dissoluteness of his life; it seems always remarkable for his enmity to our order: but ignorant of his malice, in

our journey from *Rome* to our monastery, we repaired to his dwelling as we commonly do to good catholics, for the charitable support of a night's lodging. The hypocrite received us with all the respect and pious veneration of a good christian and a firm devotee to St. *Francis*. He first refreshed us with the finest choice wine in his castle, then set us to a table plentifully furnished with the most curious viands of the season. Still more earnest to please us, the dishes removed he pushed round the glass, which, being tired with a hot and tedious journey, we drank with an innocent freedom. The evening came on, he shewed us to our chamber, and concluding as we imagined, with a glass to our repose, he then, with a thousand caresses and a face full of sincerity, told us that he thought his entertainment far from complete, if he denied us any benefit of his house, which with a *Roman* hospitality he bestowed on his friends: that since we had eat and drank freely, it was to be supposed a beautiful young girl would be no ill digestion, and that he had one for each, as charming and compliant as we could desire. Not yet yielding to the temptation, I told him with all the humble resentment due to our past obligations, that those were pleasures we had forsworn by a solemn vow of chastity. But drinking round another glass, he applied himself thus to my brother, assuring him he might

be free with him as a firm devotee to our order, that he was sensible, that flesh and blood were not put off with the form of a few words, and that nature required a vent where she admitted a repletion ; that religious vows and oaths were matters of form and of use to the service of religion, but not so binding to particulars as never to find a temporary breach. So waiting for no answer, on ringing a bell two beautiful young ladies entered the room ; they were in a charming loose undress, with their swelling bosoms all bewitchingly exposed to the eye, and sitting down by us provoked us to freedoms which they would not resist. First stealing our hands to their snowy white bosoms, they set us in such a confusion that our blood flying into our cheeks discovered desire too much in our eyes. The gentleman withdraws, and leaves us to ourselves to act what we pleased, without any witness but the actors in the pleasure. Being now left alone, my experienced brother threw off his habit and virtue at once, and meeting no resistance, soon arrived at the joy he desired. But I not yet used to affairs of this nature, with a bashful ignorance proceeded no further than kisses and caresses, while he reproaching my coldness would fain have diverted my lady in the same manner. But then raised by desire and pushed on by jealousy, and authorised by example, I attempted with fear what she gave

without any. Having in these amorous engagements now passed at least an hour, and being fast locked in one another's arms, the doors bursting open, the knight and his servants entering seized on us as we were all naked, they whipped us with cords as long as they were able, each minute upbraiding us in this manner, *O! ye wicked hypocrites, (said the knight) is this your singular vow of chastity? Is it thus that you use to conquer your temptations? Had these been my wife and my daughters thus you had used them!* Tired now with reproaches and blows, thus bloody and naked as we are he turned us out of doors.

The company seemed diverted with the honest confessions of the young friar, and on his desire of some old cloak or rag, to cover their nakedness, till they reached their convent and better accoutrements, assuring them of a plenary indulgence for all their transgressions, from their singular patroness, the *blessed Virgin Mary*; one of the youngest of the gang satisfied with the bribe and the young friar's ingenuity, threw him a piece of an old mantle, but charged him not to give his brother any bit of it, who had put such a scandal on their profession as to say he had been robbed by the banditti.

When leaving them to their shifts we galloped amain, till through various by-ways, unbeaten paths, solitary woods, lanes, and commons,

we arrived at the foot of a prodigious high craggy mountain, that seemed to kiss the very skies and overlook the clouds that hung down around it, hiding its lower parts from the eye of the sun.

CHAPTER IV.

An account of Fantasio's arriving at the banditti's castle. The relation of their robbing Cardinal Fourbin. And the ill success they met with in personating Cardinal Sermonetti.

THE mountain was terrible to behold for its vast, abrupt, and steepy height, while the brown shades of the forests that overspread the whole hill, struck a horror into the beholder, our way was through frequent and little narrow deep valleys, rugged with numerous and hollow ditches, everywhere beset and overgrown with thorny bushes and brambles, which crossed over the blind road from side to side, and with the sharp and inaccessible rocks which flanked the paths on each side of this hollow, yielded a natural defence as it surrounded the steep of the hill, from the very summit of which boiled up in many large bubbling springs, a plentiful fountain of water, which tumbling down the precipices of the hill, disembogued the silver flood

in vast and natural cascades ; whence being dispersed in abundance of little rivulets, and watering those valleys with a sort of standing pools, like pacific seas or sluggish streams, invested the whole.

The high tower, or castle of their abode, rose up on the very brow of a hideous precipice, setting out its sides every way beyond the margin of the hill. Before the entrance instead of bulwarks, were various little by-paths and mounds of earth in small mazes, defending the avenues by cunning and force. This place we may call the court of the banditti, large enough for the reception of themselves, their horses, their prisoners, and spoil. There was nothing like a habitation near it, but a little hut covered with straw, placed on the neck of the *isthmus* as I may call it, that joined the plan of the castle to the rest of the mountain, where the rogues by their lots kept sentinel every night to prevent a surprise.

Well loaded with plunder our party has admission, and coming into the court they with volleys of oaths call out an old decrepit hag, who alone seemed to have the care of the health and repast of such a number of men. *Where art thou, thou old hag? Thou property of the grave; thou affront to life, out-cast of hell; must only you and be damned, enjoy yourself at home, and not get us our supper, in order to*

refresh us after our toils and fatigues all the day? What art thou born only for thy ungodly belly, doing nothing day nor night but guzzle down our wine and devour our food, with an avaricious thirst and hunger that cannot be maintained? Turn out, you hell-dam. The poor old wretch, now trembling with age, in a thin squeaking voice and fearful tone, tried to pacify their causeless rage and customary billingsgate: Be not in a passion, my heroes, my brave boys, my hearts of oak and lungs of leather, your supper is ready, well seasoned and plentiful, bread in abundance, your bowls well cleaned and replenished with wine, a good fire to warm you, and water to wash you.

This wise discourse being over, and their eager stomachs appeased with the assurance of an immediate supply, they convey their plunder to their storehouse, wash and warm themselves, and the provision being placed on the table, every one soon threw himself into the seat that was next him. They were scarce yet seated, when in comes another much larger troop of young fellows, whom we might easily perceive to be of some society of the pad, since they brought in their prey of gold and silver vessels, rich silks, brocaded cloths of gold and the like; and having washed and warmed themselves, they scamper to the table *higgledy piggledy*. They ate and they drank without order or decorum,

voraciously devouring, not eating their meat, throwing down whole cargoes of potage, mountains of bread, and oceans of liquor. Their mirth was clamor, their singing noise, their raillery abuse; and the general confusion and hurry gave an image of what the poets feign of the feasts of the wild *Lapithæ* and *Centaurs*. The old woman and myself in the meanwhile, were by favor or contempt, placed at a side table, or rather stool, very indifferently set out. The fury of their stomachs being now pretty well appeased, one of the gang that seemed of something more authority than the rest, thus began :

I think my bullies, we who stormed the house of the old miser Arpino of Mola, came off with as much success as courage, since our virtue has not only brought off riches in abundance, but restored us to our intrenchments entire and without the loss of a man, sine clade victores; nay, if it be any advantage, we have come home six feet stronger than we went out : but you, who made your excursions into the cities of the Campagna di Roma, lessened by the loss of your brave leader Spadavoni, have brought home thin and broken squadrons, whose lives and safety I should have preferred to all the rich plunder and booty you have by your valor added to our treasure. But the brave Spadavoni, by whatever way or means his excessive and enterprising virtue destroyed him, as the memory of so great a man

deserves, shall ever be celebrated among the illustrious princes and commanders who have been eminent in the glories of the field.

But while he fell in some brave exploit, you, I suppose, being provident rogues and thieves of discretion, were on the sure lay, pilfering little thefts among the mob, fearfully nimming a cloak or rifling some old woman's bulk of a stock to set up a piece-broker's shop.

In the midst of this learned harangue, one of the gang that came home last took him up very pertly in this manner: Thou art indeed a thief of great knowledge, who only art ignorant that the houses of men of quality are broken open with more safety and less difficulty, than those of a lower degree. For though in a nobleman's palace there are a greater number of people, and those spread over every part of the house, yet being servants, they have always more regard to their own security than to their master's goods and riches. Whereas the solitary and thrifty men who have only themselves to look to their little stocks, are more wary and resolute, careful in defending their small fortune or their secret wealth, dissembled in an artificial poverty, with the hazard and expense of their blood and their lives. An example will confirm the truth of my assertion in the person of our great and regretted *Spadavoni*.

While our party was dispersed about the pa-

trimony of St. *Peter*, *Spadavoni*, myself, and four more continued at *Roma la Sancta*, to try if in the midst of all her great holiness, we could find opportunity of supplying our occasions. Cardinal *Fourbin* made a splendid entertainment for all the *French faction*, to which a great many resorted of the first quality, whose servants walked without in the *anti-chamera*, or *anti-chamber*, while their lords were enjoying the Cardinal's wine within. The servants of the family were retired to their own supper, while *Spadavoni* equipped in a cassock, like a steward, entered the anti-chamber with a torch before him, and we dressed like porters attending him; he desired those, who sat on a chest of plate that stood there, to rise up, that he might remove it. They were no sooner got up, but he ordered us porters to take it up and carry it away, which we did without hinderance or molestation, by any of the numerous train that attended, or of the Cardinal's servants, who were more intent on their supper than their master's security. Being got out of the palace, we conveyed it to our confederate near the *Tiber*, where disposing the plate into more secret repositories, we soon altered the property of the chest by the help of the fire.

However, to avoid meeting any of the company who might have observed us in the *anti-chamera*, having engaged a fellow that was

the very picture of Cardinal *Sermonetti*, and having procured a Cardinal's habit, and counterfeited a bull empowering him to gather in the tithes of the *Marca d'Ancona*, and hired two or three servants on our way, we set out of *Rome*, and passed with our train with all the respect and success we could hope or desire. We took care, indeed, to avoid all great towns, for fear of a discovery of our imposture. But having had good success in all our attempts (every one taking our false Cardinal for the true *Sermonetti*) we passed through *Romagna*, and came too near to *Bononia* for our advantage; for the Bishop of *Fermo* (who was the Pope's Vice-legate in that city) hearing of our transactions, sent a gentleman of his, who had formerly been a servant in the family of *Sermonetti*, to pay us his compliment, who, on his return to the Bishop, assured him that it was not the Cardinal himself, but some rogue that went in his habit; this assurance of his gentleman concurring with our ignorant and uncautious Cardinal's not having observed the usual ceremonies and solemnities which men of his post and dignity used to observe, he deputed the same gentleman with a party of soldiers, and a commission to bring our Cardinal and his accomplices before him, provided he was sure that he was not the person whose name he assumed.

Spadavoni on the first message from the Bishop, and the dubious words of the messenger, concluded this scene near an end ; wherefore having taken care of great part of the cargo, with one or two of our gang made his way to our place of rendezvous, with orders for me and another to stay and attend the event, and if danger ensued and the enemy should be too strong for us, to make a timely retreat ; to bring off the imaginary Cardinal, if possible, he being a man of such admirable parts and address, and of courage equal to *Hannibal* or *Cæsar* ; but if that were not practicable, that leaving the strangers with him, we should make the best of our way to our appointed place of meeting.

Spadavoni was not long gone but the Bishop's gentleman returns with a troop of horse, whose commander he ordered to seize the impostor ; which he, acting with a severity and resolution extraordinary, asserted his authority, charged them *to take heed what they did*, thundering out threats at them all in so terrible a manner, as made them all tremble at his *anathema's*, and bearing it out in as high and lofty terms, as any of the proudest Cardinals in *Rome* could have done on such a violence offered. The soldiers, (who made no small scruple to assault him, their captain leading the way and pulling off his Cardinal's cap, discovered his want of ears,

which he had lost in some noble exploit) now press in upon him and carry him prisoner to *Bononia*, with two of his men who knew nothing of the cheat, while I and my fellows in the crowd made our escape. I ventured in disguise to observe the event of this affair, and to try if any means would offer to set him at liberty.

He was too well guarded, and too nicely watched, for us to bring him any assistance ; for being condemned by the Vice-legate, we saw him hanged in a Cardinal's habit at St. *Petronio's* gate, wearing on his head a mitre of paper and this inscription over him : *Il Re di Lardi*, that is, *the King of Thieves*. He had six thousand crowns in gold about him, which was nothing to what *Spadavoni* and the rest of us carried away.

CHAPTER V.

The robbers continue their relations. The unfortunate end of their leader Spadavoni, in his attempt to get into an old banker's house: the same ill fate of Aquino, in his pillaging an old woman who by a stratagem threw him out of window. Francisquinos' exploits at Sienna and his death. Their notable design on the house of a Florentine Marquis in the shape of a bear, in which Sparapani perished most manfully.

AFTER this unhappy catastrophe of our new associate, we all of us repaired to our leader, and having disposed of our purchase in places of security, we set out in quest of new adventures. For changing our habits we returned to *Rome*, safer there than anywhere else, by the largeness and populousness of that city. Our first business was, and which is the masterpiece of our art, to inquire out the people of popular fame for their riches: in which inquiry, a rich old miser called *Ceano*, escaped not our knowledge. This man was master of an incredible wealth and a *banker* by trade, who for fear of public offices and payments, with an abundance of art concealed an abundance of money. He lived solitarily alone, in a little but strongly fortified house, in that part of the city which is called *La Isola* or the

Island ; where in a habit beggarly and patched he sat continually brooding over his bags of silver and gold. In a council of war, it was therefore agreed to begin our campaign with this *banker*, because our destined combat being but against one, we flattered ourselves with the success of a speedy possession of vast hoarded treasure. So without any delay, we set ourselves on the watch in the beginning of the evening about his suspicious doors. Which, the night being advanced, we durst not attempt to force off the hinges or burst open, least the noise of the assault should alarm the neighbourhood to our destruction ; our generous and brave leader, *Spadavoni*, full of his wonted and eminent virtue, endeavoured by stratagem to compass our ends. There was a little wicket in the door, by which the miser gave answers in the evenings, and received any message sent him about business, never opening the door to his nearest acquaintance after it was once fastened ; by wondrous art and dexterity *Spadavoni* picked the lock, yet could not get it wide enough for an easy pursuit of his enterprise, by reason of a small chain that went behind it. However bearing his arm, he by force thrust it in to reach the bar of the door, and manage it by degrees from the place it was fixed in. But that worst of two-footed dogs, old *Ceano*, too wakeful with fear of his god in his bags, had plainly observed

all that was done, and with profound silence and careful soft steps, steals up to the door with a great nail in one hand and a hammer in the other, and with one sound and sudden blow, nails the hand of our unfortunate leader to the bar of the door, and getting up to the top of his little sty as we may call it, he began to cry out fire as loud as he could, calling every neighbour by name to come to his assistance for their own sakes. The nearness of the evil soon roused all the people to his rescue, whom else they would never have stirred one foot to preserve.

Being now in a wood, what to do, and every way surrounded with danger and disgrace, either of falling into their hands altogether, or of leaving our noble fellow-soldier in the briars, we, by his consent, from the present necessity of our affairs, took the middle course between these extremes. We, therefore, with an admirable dexterity cut off his arm close to his shoulder, and clapping all the linen we had to the wound that we might not be traced by the blood, marched off the ground with our utmost speed, bearing *Spadavoni* in our arms, and leaving only his arm, a spoil too noble for the miser. The growing tumult was too near, his weakness too great, to keep pace with our necessary flight, which by supporting him must needs be much retarded, he master of an heroic mind and virtue extraordinary, having in vain begged us

with his utmost earnestness, by our military oath and the common ties of society, to deliver him from tortures and captivity, urging that it was too ignoble a fate for a *banditti* of courage to outlive the loss of his arm, by which only he could rob and cut the throats of rogues richer than we, and that he should be happy to die by the hands of his friends ; finding all his arguments could not prevail with any of us to be guilty of so voluntary a parricide, taking out his sword in that hand which yet remained, and fixing many a warlike kiss upon it, with one bold and home stroke, he pierced his manly heart. Then paying a profound veneration to the exemplary virtue of our leader, we soon commit his body to the *Tiber*. He gave himself indeed a death worthy the heroic exploits of his life, and had the most famous river in the world for his grave.

Aquino in the meanwhile, with happy beginnings having endeavoured to repair this loss in *La Isola*, near the gate del Populo, met with a no less sinister event. With equal address and safety having got into the house of an old woman, without so much as waking her, by the false step of not first despatching her was deprived of the triumph of his prowess ; for coming into her chamber, and having thrown great part of her goods out at window down to us, and having now pretty well finished his work without any

discovery, he would needs take the bed from under the old hag, which waked her and brought her on her knees to him as he was going to throw it out of the window after the rest; *I beg you, my son*, said this wheedling old beldam to Aquino, *tell me why you take the poor patched coverlets from a wretched old woman, to give them to my wealthy neighbour, into whose garden this window directly conveys them.*

Aquino deceived with this subtle pretence, believing that she told him nothing but truth, lest what he had already thrown out, and what yet remained, should fall into the hands of strangers, not his companions, the night being dark, he hung himself out of the window to the utmost stretch of his arms, to examine exactly the truth of the matter, and take a narrow observation of the next house, which she had told him would carry off all his plunder: which while he was performing with his utmost care and last imprudence, the old woman's stratagem took effect, who though weak with age, yet now strengthened with fear and despair, with one sudden and unexpected thrust, she sent him down headlong to the ground. The height which he fell, and a vast stone that received him, broke several of his ribs, and made such a mortal contusion in his body, that vomiting up rivulets of blood, only able to tell us what had passed in the midst of the most dreadful pains in

the world, expired on the spot. We immediately gave him the same manner of burial we had began, and sent him a follower to his noble leader *Spadavoni*.

Being wounded thus with a double blow in the loss of our two brave companions, weary of this *Roman* expedition, we left that city, and took our course towards *Florence*, on a design noble as dangerous, yet which, if we had not lost the brave young *Rinaldo* in, we should not blush at relating. We were obliged to make some stay at *Sienna*, in order to prepare our machines for our *opera*, which would take up some weeks to bring to perfection. But not to lose our time, and to secure ourselves from suspicion, *Francisquino*, a man of the best figure and address among us, is set out like a man of quality, taking one of the best houses in the city, and most of our gang passed for his servants. His bounty and magnificence made him soon taken notice of, and he kept open house for all gentlemen and persons of quality to game at. By this means and his good address in the art, he made a tolerable shift to defray his expenses, but that not being sufficient for the end we proposed, on the arrival of any strangers of figure, he invited them to his house, and having entered them at play, on their second visit we took care decently to cut their throats and bestow their bodies in the privy.

Our machine being ready, the best part of us departed a by-way towards *Leghorn*, to fall into the road from that town to *Florence*, having hired a close cart and a couple of mules to draw it. *Francisquino* soon took other servants in our places, which afterwards was the cause of his ruin. For they not being in the secret, and sent away to bed when the company was yet at play, took care to watch the matter more closely, and discovering the exploits of *Francisquino* and our comrades, gave secret information of the matter to the magistrates, who coming in the night seized the supposed master and all his confederates, except *Tancredo*, who made his escape to us to *Florence*, while *Francisquino* and the rest were cruelly put to death in the most rigorous and ignominious manner in the world, after they had trod on the necks of fourteen scoundrels, and had now in the house fourteen thousand florins, all seized and lost with them.

But to pass from this melancholy loss to our journey to *Florence*, you must know that the great Duke has a place near his stables which is called the *Seraglio*, where the wild beasts were kept, which are often made to fight with one another: there are lions, leopards, tigers, wolves, wild boars, and foxes, all which they let out severally at the doors of their dens into a fair court to fight; when they have fought as long as the Duke pleases, a man inclosed in a wooden

green dragon, putting lights at his eyes, and moving it on wheels, frights them all into their dens again. The Prince and court in the meantime standing above in security, see all the combat.

The overseer of these sports was the Marquis *Horatio Balalti Nerli*, a person of great magnificence and fortune, whose house was adjoining to that of the *Scraglio*; he lived in a splendor worthy his fortune, and gave ample rewards to all such as brought any wild beast to present him or the grand Duke. It happened about this time that there was a sort of mortality among the beasts which had very much reduced their number, either by the heat of the weather or want of that air and liberty their captivity denied them. This ruin of their sports gave us a happy opportunity of accomplishing our designs. For having made a machine with an admirable art at *Sienna*, inclosed in the skin of a bear of monstrous size, in which we left room for a man to place himself so as to move all the parts of the beast with an action and motion equal to the life: we then proposed a common oath of secrecy and fidelity, and that some one of our company more excellent for the courage of his mind, than strength of his body, should voluntarily and freely of his own motion, be inclosed in this machine, and execute the person and offices of the bear: by which means

being received into the Marquis's house, he should in the night let in his comrades.

This admirable invention being as exactly performed as thought of, and generally approved, not a few of our gang were ambitious of the charge; but among the candidates with a *nemine contradicente*, the choice fell on *Prospero Sparapani*. Who immediately with a countenance serene and intrepid takes possession of the new form, and by a speedy metamorphosis was changed into a formidable bear, convenient and imperceptible holes being made for his sight and respiration. Thus transfigured into a beast, with admirable courage and nimbleness he gets into the cart, which having brought at last into the road from *Leghorn* to *Florence*, we drove directly along to that city. Having thus artfully laid the first grounds of our subtle design, our progress was succeeded by no less happy impostures. For having found by inquiry, that there was one *Niccoli*, a merchant of *Leghorn*, who had often correspondence with the Marquis on these occasions, we forge a letter from *Signor Niccoli*, importing, *that he had sent the grand Duke a present that would in some measure make amends for his loss, in a bear of no common magnitude.*

The evening being now pretty well advanced, we take the advantage of the dusky hour to bring *Prospero* with *Niccoli's* letter, to the house of the Marquis. Who admiring the noble large-

ness of the beast, and pleased with the present of his friend, so well timed, ordered us immediately to be paid twenty pieces for our pains. Then, as is usual on such occasions, abundance of people full of wonder and amaze flock round the bear, out of curiosity to view a sight so new and so pleasing, whose too near and inquisitive eyes *Sparapani* forbid by his frequent minacious looks and actions.

The Marquis immediately commanded the beast to be had to his den, and gave order that peculiar care should be taken of his food and litter. This was the cue for me to interpose, which I did in this manner: *My Lord, said I, give me leave to inform you, that it is not safe to commit this noble beast, now tired with the heat and fatigue of a long journey to the common dens of the rest, especially since, as I understand, there has been a sickness among them, from whom this, being fresh may the more easily draw in the infection; you had better, my Lord, allow him some cool place in your house near some fresh water, for your Lordship must know that it is the nature of these creatures to sleep in groves, or over cold springs. By this means you may have his den well washed and aired all this night, and put him in with more safety to-morrow.*

The Marquis was not a little startled at what I said, and remembering what a number had already been lost, he suffered us with ease to

place the wooden cage (in which we had inclosed him) in what manner we pleased. We offered our service to watch him all night, to give him his meat and his drink, according to his custom, and do every thing that was necessary to his weary condition. There is no need replied the Marquis to give you that trouble. I have men enough who have been used to these creatures, to do all that is necessary. So taking our leave we departed and made the best of our way to an old ruined monastery, in which we found a dark cave or burying place, much out of the way, where we open the coffins, empty now of all but some few ashes and remains of the dead, which we removed to make room for the future plunder we promised ourselves from a design so well concerted, and hitherto so prosperous. Observing the true discipline of our order, we take the advantage of the moonless night, and of the dead season, when the first sleep with the greatest force and firmness invades the eyes of men, and with swords in our hands our hardy brigade took their post near the gate of the Marquis, as a certain and promising omen of our successful spoliation of so valuable a fortress.

Sparapani was not idle in his post, but in the deep silence of the night steals out of his cage and with a sword kills all his keepers, now fast asleep, double captives to *Morpheus* and *Bac-*

chus, and little suspecting any such matter, then decently despatching the porter of the house, he softly opens the door and lets in our squadron, to whom, now received into the bosom of the palace, he shews the place where he had observed the massive piles of plate had been laid up the evening before ; which being broke open, our order was with speed to bear off our plunder of silver and gold to the secret repositories of the dead I have mentioned, and then to come back with our utmost expedition for a fresh cargo ; while I alone, as that is still my office, was left to attend at the door, and carefully to watch all accidents till their sudden return. We thought, that the running about of the bear as got loose, would be our sufficient protection from any interruption ; for who would not rather fly than approach a creature of that fierce nature, if any one should happen to be awake, or roused by the noise ? and rather with more industry fasten his doors, than set them open for so terrible an encounter. But notwithstanding all these politic precautions, our prosperous beginnings brought forth a sinister event.

While I wait at the door the return of my companions, a venturous bold rogue and servant of the Marquis, awaked by the noise, steals softly towards it, and seeing the bear running loose about the house makes a silent retreat, and alarms all the house, and lets them know

what he has seen. In a moment the numerous family is in arms, and the gloomy shades of night are banished by candles, links, and flambeaux, nor was any one unarmed of all that appeared, some had clubs, some pikes, some drawn swords, to stop and defend the avenues against the bear, to these were added hounds and vast dogs used to hunt such desperate game, whom with all their endeavours they hallooed to the onset.

While this tumult is rising I speed my flight out of the house, yet so as I could, without through the door, perceive the miserable combat *Sparapani* was forced to maintain with the dogs. For though he was destitute of all hopes of safety, and sure of being a sacrifice to his malicious fortune, yet mindful of himself, us, and his ancient virtue, like another *Hercules* he grappled with so many *Cerberus's* at once. Keeping therefore that shape which he had so manfully assumed, now flying, now resisting, with the various motions and turns of his body he gets out of the house. But alas! though he had with such bravery and dexterity gained the liberty of the street, it was not in the fates that he should save himself by flight. For all the dogs in the kennels now joining those that pursued him out of the house, pressed him too close for all hopes of escape. I beheld the miserable melancholy sight, the valorous *Sparapani* besieged by whole squadrons of dogs,

and every minute in danger of the weapons of his eager pursuers. Too impatient any longer to be a tame looker-on, I joined myself to the crowd of people that surrounded him, hoping so to bring my distressed fellow soldier all the secret help I could devise. Thus, therefore, I spoke to the pursuers : *It is a shame we should rob the great Duke of so noble a beast, by a too violent assault on his life.* But the people were too eager to mind what I said, and a tall lusty young fellow, coming out of the house thrust his spear into the very breast of the bear, another shot off his piece at his head, and every one encouraging the other, they all sheathed their pikes and swords in his body.

On the other side *Sparapani*, the glory and honor of our tribe, as worthy of immortality for his patience as great spirit, betrayed not the faith and religion of his oath by the least cry or groan : but being now rent and torn by the teeth of the dogs, mangled with pikes and swords, and pierced through with bullets, bearing the tenor of his present case with a generous vigor, with a serene sort of noise he gave up the ghost. His wonderful defence had struck such a terror into the company, that none durst venture to touch him till the next morning, when a butcher, much bolder than the rest, adventured with his knife, though not without fear, to uncase the noble thief from out of the bearskin.

CHAPTER VI.

An account of the banditti's excursion, and bringing home a beautiful virgin called Camilla, from her mother's arms, the very night before her day of marriage. The excess of her grief: her ominous dream, and favorable interpretation of it. Fantasio's persuasions to ease her sorrows, and his going to bed with her; and the dangerous temptations he passed with her that night.

THUS fell our brave *Sparapani*, but fell not without great glory. On the first discovery our careful companions got our horses to the place where the trusty dead had preserved our plunder for us, with all the speed they could make they posted to the mountains, and there in the solitudes of the *Appenines* waited my arrival with the news of the catastrophe of the tragedy I have told you. As we journeyed the hills, and were getting out of the confines of *Florence*, the loss we had sustained furnished us with reflections on the brittle state of human affairs, how little trust there was to be reposed in this frail life, and how little difference fortune pays to the most consummate virtue. We were not a little concerned lest our dear friend departed should quit this life with any unjust thoughts of our conduct, and impute our not succouring him in his distress to our treachery, not want of power.

Thus taking in our prey at our several haunts, tired with the fatigue of the expedition, with the loss of so many worthy comrades, we, that remain, have brought you home the purchase you have seen.

After this discourse the bowl went round to the pious and immortal memory of the slain, and having driven away these melancholy reflections on the dead with good store of rich wine, they all go to rest. The old hag, that was their housekeeper, had me up two or three steps into a little room strongly barricadoed, in which was a tolerable bed, in which without undressing I laid me down to take some repose, if my thoughts on my present condition could allow me any intervals of rest. I had tortured myself for some time with vain considerations which afford no relief, till now quite overcome with the weary toil of the day, sleep with the auxiliary force of the night sealed down my reluctant eye lids.

But I had not long enjoyed this repose, before I was waked with great confused noise of curses and oaths, and leaping off the bed I applied my eye to the key-hole of the door, and found it was a tumultuary preparation of the rogues for some new enterprise, who, at midnight, were going out of their den in pursuit of some prize ; swords, pistols, and vizors, they where all furnished with, when leading their horses out of the court they all departed

except the old woman and myself. It was now almost morning, when the robbers return with no other purchase but a beautiful young virgin, whom they guarded with pistols and swords in their hands. Her dress discovered her to be a lady of the first quality of that country, and her passion was so extreme as must have moved any but such bloody and barbarous rogues, who had lost all humanity in a perpetual course of murder and rapine.

She tore her hair and rent her garments, and filled all the place with pitiful complaints. They, to appease the rage of her grief, gave her assurance, *that she might be secure of her life and her virtue, desiring her to allow a little patience to their advantage, whom necessity had driven to a trade so inhuman. Your parent* (continued they) *though avaricious to a fault, yet out of such riches and possessions will soon give us a ransom for you, to both our contents.* But all they could say, could not put a stop to the young lady's complainings, for reclining her lovely head upon her snowy white bosom, she let fall whole showers of bright tears that might have mollified the hearts of any but them. So calling the old woman, they gave her in charge to her, with orders to place us together, since companions in distress might alleviate her sorrows. But all the old woman and I could urge for her comfort, had little effect, while she answered

our discourse with tears and groans, and these mournful plaintive words: *How can I cease to weep* (said she, with a penetrating sigh) *or even endure the burden of life in my present condition? Wretch that I am, born of a family so illustrious, ravished away from parents so pious and so indulgent; deprived of my faithful and loving servants, and made the unhappy prey of rapine, slavishly confined to this hideous stone prison, the innocent pleasures I was born and bred to, are now banished all from me, who lie under the terrible uncertainty of torments, and life and horror in the hands of such a number of banditti, the horrid uncouth people of violence and the sword.*

In the midst of these lamentations, her spirit being quite spent by the agitation of her mind and the weariness of her body, she was forced to let her fair eye-lids fall together and allow to sleep a short interval in her woe. But her repose was not long, for starting on a sudden in wild manner from her sleep, her grief had a fresh and more violent rise. She beat her beautiful bosom and charming face with her hands, and thus she answered with a torrent of sighs our inquiry into the cause of this unexpected emotion.—*Now, alas! I utterly perish indeed! Now I renounce all hope of my delivery and life; give me some means of a speedy death,*

pierce, pierce this breast with some sword or dagger, or let me throw myself down some horrid precipice.

The old woman at this put on a countenance of anger, and with menacing looks demanded the cause of her new grief, and what, since her sleep could make her burst out into so unreasonable an extravagance? What, you have a mind (continued the old hag) to deprive my brave young masters of the benefit of your redemption, if you continue thus obstinate long, in spite of your tears, which the *banditti* have seldom any regard to, you shall be burned alive.

Camilla (for that was her name) being terrified with a threat so intolerable, taking hold of the old woman's hand, she kissed her rivelled flesh, or rather skin, with her vermilion lips, and thus in a tender pathetic tone addressed herself to her: Ah! reverend mother (said she) forgive me; forgive the severity of my fortune, and calling to your mind the duties of common humanity which sure can never entirely quit the breast of a woman, have a little patience with my distress. Take but a view of the scene of my calamity, and if pity be not wholly dried up in your venerable age, you will not deny me your compassion.

There lives in the city of *Fundi*, a young gentleman of equal beauty and virtue, as

chief of that place by his quality, so by common vote of the people the public son of the city, by birth my relation, exceeding me but three years in age, bred always together in the same house, the same room, with mutual affections growing up with our persons, betrothed to me by consent of our parents to share the same bed; the day is now come when in the church he waits to confirm the public vows, and crown both his and mine by the holy nuptial tie; attended with his friends, followers, and servants, he waits with impatience to receive me from my mother: but alas! while my mother pressed me on her bosom, adorning my body with her own hand, and fixing frequent kisses on my cheek, full of joy and hope of the blessing of grandchildren, on a sudden there breaks into the house and so into the chamber where I was, none of the coward family making any resistance, a band of armed men with their swords drawn and pistols in their hands, and tearing me away from my dear mother's arms, from her bosom panting with fear and concern, half dead with terror, and almost breathless with the agony of so terrible a surprise; and thus are my nuptials like those of *Atis* and *Protesilaus*, disturbed and disappointed by fate insupportable.

But as if my past ills were insufficient to make me most wretched, I was no sooner got

to sleep, but this scene full of horror renewed and redoubled my misfortunes. Methought I was borne with violence away from my apartment, nay, from my very nuptial bed, calling on my miserable husband for help, as I was hurried through the devious and untrodden ways of a wilderness ; while he, all 'crowned with wreaths of flowers and odoriferous with sweet waters, immediately pursued my steps, flying on feet not my own ; and as he passed along, in the midst of his complaints for the loss of his dear and beautiful wife, he implored the people's assistance to her rescue ; when one of the robbers, that was bearing me away, provoked with indignation at so obstinate a pursuit, taking up a vast stone, threw it at my husband and dashed out his brains. This dream, so dismal, threw me into such a grief, that it burst the bands of sleep in the manner you saw.

The old woman on this seeming to indulge her sorrows, addresses herself to her in the following manner : Be of good heart, my charming young daughter, and do not torment your sweet self in so barbarous a manner, at the vain terrors and false omens of a mere idle dream. For besides that in the day time false images of things are naturally represented, so even those of the night always prognosticate by contraries. For to weep, to sigh, to groan, and

sometimes to be wounded to death in our dreams, are certain promises of advantageous and lucky events. . On the other side, to laugh and be merry, to fill one's belly with delicious food, or to come to venereal enjoyments, foretel either grief of mind or languor of body, or other losses or damages. Give, therefore, no more heed to such faint shadows of evil, which, if they signify anything, assure you of good fortune and a speedy delivery.

The rogues being again setting out for more mischief, the old hag left *Camilla* and me alone ; all spies being removed, and the rage of her grief a little abated, like the sun breaking out of a cloud after a shower of rain, she began with half shorn beams to shine out upon me. My captivity had not yet so far mortified my appetite, or restored that virtue the Cardinal's family had destroyed, or at least oppressed, but that I found no small satisfaction in viewing her face, her arms, her breasts everywhere exactly proportioned and perfectly beautiful. She was of the taller sort of women, with a majesty in her mien and her face so mingled with softness, that it at once awed and invited. My heart being thus full of tender sentiments for *Camilla*, I could not omit anything I thought conducive to her ease, or the banishing those cares from her bosom which gave her so much pain.

Wherefore after some previous discourses of the eagerness of her passion, and grief for the loss of her destined husband, I by degrees slid into the disadvantages of marriage to the ladies, a topic I had often heard elegantly managed by Donna Theresa. *Madam, said I, I am afraid your ignorance of the natural inconstancy of man, and the despotic authority of his reign, when once he is master of his momentary wishes, that you represent to yourself the loss of a husband as an evil so insupportable. Certainly, a woman who in Italy is fond of being married, has a peculiar inclination to captivity and slavery. For however obsequious the man of this country may be in the chase of his pleasure, he grows a mere tyrant, when possession has only left him the person without the desire. For, believe me, all the gay day-dreams which fill lovers' fancies, of pleasures and joy in the arms of each other, pass off like a dream when we are waked by enjoyment, few men sinking by degrees from their heat to indifference, and thence to aversion; the major part starting at once from raptures to torments, from love to hate or disgust. Women, therefore, should not have so vain a confidence in their charms or their virtue, as to think the first can keep the husband's warmth always alive, or the latter, her own desires confined to an ill-natured master.*

“ Camilla, in some passion, desired me to

“ be silent, or not abuse her ears with reflections as impious as false ; that there were no general maxims to be drawn from the depravity of particulars, who would obtrude their own vicious inclinations on all the world besides, out of an overweening partiality to their own sense, judgment, or virtue ; that how frail soever I may have found myself in the adventures of love, she found security enough within her, against any of those fears I promoted by my arguments. Fortune had befriended her virtue, in giving her a person approved of by all as the most accomplished of men ; that when her choice was so publicly approved and their love had grown up with each other, their tempers known as well as persons, there could not be any doubt of a happiness equal to whatever imagination could form. She therefore begged of me, if I would not render myself more odious than the rogues, to desist from so vain and injurious a discourse, and unbefitting indeed the mouth of a lady that pretended to any remains of modesty or honor.”

This was a terrible shock to my hopes, and I was puzzled to bring myself off from any criminal imputation, from a virtue so nice and severe as I found hers, at least fortified by a love not yet arrived at enjoyment.

“Madam, (said I, with a bashful confusion)
“if what I have said proceeded from the sen-
“timents of my heart, I should have reason
“to fear your reproaches with justice, since
“I confess, they are not the maxims of youth,
“and inexperienced innocence and virtue. But
“willing to drive away this hostile grief that
“thus invades your repose, I attacked it that
“way that I thought most effectual; for he
“that removes the cause, takes away the effect.
“I found love and constancy to the beloved
“youth was the greatest source of your tears;
“could I therefore have brought you to other
“sentiments of men, I bid fair for appeasing a
“sorrow which too much affected even me,
“who have evils of my own of a sufficient
“importance and greatness to take up my
“concern. But though I have mistaken my
“first medicine, I hope a fresh trial may
“supply that defect, when I apply one more
“agreeable to your constitution. And that is
“only in short to consider, that by giving way
“to a grief so impetuous, you endeavour to
“prevent the indulgence of providence, and
“disappoint by your sorrows the joys you
“desire. The wheel of fortune is in a per-
“petual revolution; by an anxious and unruly
“rage of passion you pervert the happy issue
“of your affairs, which otherwise in the vi-
“cissitudes of fate would ensue. To give

“ yourself up to the disposal of any passion
“ without the direction and counsel of reason,
“ is a sin against your reason and yourself,
“ and while you continue a slave to that, you
“ suffer those pains and torments which this
“ would soon deliver you from. Your charms,
“ your beauties, your health, your life is your
“ lover’s, and you wrong him while you let
“ any of them be impaired by the enemy of
“ their being; and there is a sort of falsehood
“ in suffering any passion to possess a heart
“ that ought only to be full of love. Now love
“ is all joy and rapture, it sinks and grows languid
“ in sorrow and misery, so that by indulging
“ these you prepare the way for the
“ driving of love quite out of your heart.
“ Think of this, and sigh any longer if you
“ can; think of this, and drown your lovely
“ eyes in tears till they assume a hostile red,
“ if you think fit; think of this, and beat that
“ downy bosom and heavenly face with those
“ fine hands any more, if you have so little
“ regard to him whose right to them is
“ avowed.

Camilla listened with much more pleasure and attention to this discourse than the former. She immediately calmed the storm of her sighs, and shut up the sources of her showers of tears; and her eyes now cast a more serene and bright shine, not yet free from a watery cast. *You have*

vanquished, Madam, said she, the obstinacy of my woe, and my Baldinotti's right to me has power to restrain the rage of my passion. The reason of your argument is too fine and too surprising, conveys too much satisfaction, for me to resist the return of repose. I have a confidence in my innocence, and assurance in providence and hopes in my lover, that all conspiring may soon deliver me from this odious captivity.

The *banditti*, in the meanwhile, were gone out in quest of new plunder, and no body left to guard their castle but the old woman, who then reparing to us, was not a little pleased to find *Camilla's* languishment and tears so well removed, and her face discover a content she little expected. Providing, therefore, a small repast for her guests, we satisfied our humour, and were left to go to bed together. I confess the opportunity was the mother of a great deal of pleasure and fear. *Camilla* undressing herself without apprehension of being seen by a man, discovered such beauties as were sufficient to fire an hermit, if we suppose him possessed with all that stoical indifference he pretends to. Her breasts being set at liberty from the prison of her stays, seemed like two beautiful globes, firm and round, and frequently heaving with thoughts of her lover; her skin was whiter than the finest *Parian* marble, but not so cold and uniform a colour; the white of the lilly, that everywhere

was seen, was suffused with the faint but warm blush of the rose ; her legs were most delicately turned, and verified the promise of her arms ; her hair, now dishevelled on her shoulders, reached down in loose ringlets to her very waste, shining like the purest gold. In short, imagination could not rise above her perfection, and entering the bed, she seemed a prize worthy a god. Had *Helen* her charms, it were no wonder that the *Greeks* and the *Trojans* had contended for her with so obstinate a fury. It was not long ere I threw myself down by her side, though scarce able freely to breathe, by the excess of the pleasure of approaching so much beauty in so advantageous a manner. However, though my desires were mounted to their height, fear mingled with my thoughts, and her prepossession for another made me cautious of endeavouring to gratify a passion which required greater virtue than I had learned in the Cardinal's family, to resist. While desire and prudence were contending within me, sleep, by the cares and fatigues of the past day grown more strong, had laid his leaden sceptre on the eyes of *Camilla*. I waited with impatience to be sure that it was so, and first gently pressed her arm, that was thrown quite over her head, with soft gentle kisses, which failing to wake her I could not forbear to proceed farther, and throwing aside the clothes, the lamp in the

room casting yet a full light, I with a trembling hand withdrew all the linen that hid from my eyes those secret beauties devoted to *Baldinotti*. In her sleep she had turned herself on her back, so that I easily viewed all her naked charms, and with pleasure and transport let my amorous hand and lips wander over her body.

Nature could not be controled at this sight ; it was impossible, having seen so much as I had, not to venture for the ease of that pain which such beauties had raised ; yet still afraid to have all my joys vanish in her waking, I was careful not to yield to the impulse of my wishes, but placing myself as close as possible, I could not help pressing my body to hers, till on the sudden she clasped me in her arms, and not yet freed from the chains of kind sleep, she muttered in broken sounds, my dear *Baldonotti* ! Oh ! the rapture that ensued this tender embrace ! and how I prayed my good stars to double her drowsy captivity, that I might attempt some fuller satisfaction. Softly, therefore, creeping on her lovely bosom, and now approaching the very haven of bliss, I perceived her to waken, while with imperfect joy, I speedily shrunk to my place, casting gently over her the clothes of the bed.

She asked me what disturbed me and made me so uneasy as to wake her from so pleasing a dream ? I complained of an illness that forced

me from the bed, and was sorry it had waked her from her repose, and after a little discourse we both seemed to return to the arms of sleep. But I could not yet compass so good a relief from desires too troublesome near their so powerful cause. Again I renewed the view, which only served to renew my uneasiness ; again ran over the beauties I durst not attempt to enjoy ; again I attempted what again I was deprived of: for just as I thought myself in the very road to bliss, and sleep, the faithful guardian of my pleasures kept her fast in his arms, a sudden loud and clamorous noise made me fly from the arms of *Camilla*, who with it awaked in a panic fear and trembling. The agony I was in furnished me with the easy means of counterfeiting the like, till hearing their oaths and imprecations we found it the return of the robbers to their castle.

At their presence I was recalled from my airy visions of pleasure by fear, to reflect how near my folly had brought me to my undoing ; since from her resentment and the barbarity of the rogues, present death was the least I had to expect.

CHAPTER II.

In the absence of the thieves Fantasio and Camilla attempt their escape, and get from the old woman their guardian, some way from the castle, but being met by the robbers, with opprobrious language are driven back again, and find at their return the old woman hanged by her own hands. They cast them into chains and deliberate on their punishment, which is deferred till the next morning.

THE *banditti* had met with a vigorous opposition, and brought home several of their gang pretty much wounded, whom with their plunder leaving at home, the rest having made a kind of running banquet, went out again to fetch from a by-cave, where they had left it, the remains of their prize. Fear, and avarice of their neighbour's goods, gave wings to their journey; for soon after day-break they were all returned with their booty. They were some days before they thought of going abroad again, and spent their time in revelling and eating, and making disguises for their future adventures; but their companions being now perfectly recovered, and all tired by an inactivity in roguery, which they were not accustomed to, they set out with their usual noise and confusion, leaving only at home the old woman, a horse they had lamed in their last expedition, and ourselves.

While *Camilla* and I, some hours after, sitting at a loop-hole or blind window, that surveyed all the precipice, heard suddenly the old woman cry out in a pitiful manner, it happened she had left by chance our door open, and we both ran out to see what was the matter, when we found her on the ground, holding the bridle of the horse with all her force, who dragged her about the court. *Camilla* took the hint; behold, said she, fortune now offers an opportunity of our escape, which we did not expect. The castle is without guard, the old woman too much bruised by the horse to oppose us, and the beast ready to receive us to bear us from our enemies.

We staid not long to debate on the matter, but wresting the bridle out of her hand, with our utmost expedition we led him out of the inclosure, and getting both on his back, and passing with pain and no small danger down the height of the mountain, we pushed on our journey with all the little speed the lame creature could make. While I was considering our present condition and what would be our fate should we again fall into the hands of the robbers, *Camilla* was not less solicitous in her thoughts about our safety and escape, while sighing and turning up her charming eyes to heaven—*Oh! ye supreme powers!* said she, *and thou, oh! virgin patroness of my youth, oh! now at length*

bring help to your votary in the great extremity of her affairs ! And thou, o cruel fortune ! cease thy barbarous persecution of the innocent, and let thy fury cease its impetuous rage ; for sure thou art sufficiently glutted with the excess of my miseries past. And thou, mute minister of my delivery, bear me safe home, restore me to the dear arms of my mourning parents and my beautiful husband, and Bucephalus shall be less famous, for there shall be no bounds to the honors I will pay thee, or the provender I will allow thee !

The horse, as if sensible of the bribe that was offered, forgetting his lameness, bore us briskly along till we came to a place where three ways met ; uncertain which to take, by guess we took that which turned to the right, as leading directly to *Camilla's* father's house, though much against the inclinations of the beast, as if he had been sensible of what immediately happened. For we had not rode far but we met, on full speed a party of the gang, returning with their prey. They knew us at a distance, and full of a deriding laughter called out to us : *Whither away so fast our good guests ? What need you be in such haste ? Are you not afraid of your maidenheads, travelling thus alone ? Nor the goblins and fairies, that haunt these woods and by-ways ? And you, my bashful young virgin, are you stealing a visit to your parents ? Alas !*

you are ignorant of the way, let us be your guards against the injuries of the road, and conduct you the nearest way to your journey's end.

At this word seizing our horse's bridle, they turn us back again. Our melancholy and grief may easily be imagined at this fatal disappointment, and the very animal that carried us seemed to partake of our sorrow ; for as if he had known where he was going, his former lameness returns, and he limped along in a most slow and dismal manner. *What, says he (who had stopped our flight, to the horse, laying about him most unmercifully) do you begin your old tricks ? Do those feet of yours only know how to fly away ? But now when we met you you could equal the flight of Pegasus, but now you go homeward you would lose the race to a snail.* With these words he renewed the blows, and drove us along before him, till now arriving at the castle gate, we found on the branch of a cypress tree hung, the pendulous old woman, now quite past recovery and dead. One of the gang taking her down, tying her up in her own halter, threw her immediately down the precipice without any concern ; then putting us both into chains, with ravenous appetites they fell aboard the last supper the old woman could ever provide for them.

Having pretty well devoured their food, and the edge of their hunger well abated, they be-

gan to consider of our punishment, and their revenge. Variety of opinions could not be avoided in so tumultuary an assembly. The first who delivered his sentence was for burning us alive, the second for exposing us to wild beasts, the third for hanging us, the fourth for having us expire in torments ; but however different in the manner, the votes of the whole company agreed in death. When all being now silent, one of the gang began with a very demure and calm countenance in this manner :

It is not agreeable to the grandeur and equity of our college, or the moderation of every particular member, or my own modesty, to suffer your indignation to rage beyond the measure and guilt of the crime. I must needs tell you, gentlemen, that I am by no means for exposing them to wild beasts consuming them with fire or suspending them in the air, nor crushing them with torments, or for seeking so swift a dispatch of their lives by deaths so speedy as these. If, therefore, you follow my humble advice, you will give the ladies their lives, but yet such lives, as they only deserve. You remember that horse, always sluggish, a great feeder, and now a liar, while in his flight he flew with all his feet, but in his return counterfeiting lameness, he halted on all fours, the plotted companion and minister of their escape, worthy therefore to share their fate, and

afford us something towards their punishment. Let us therefore, to-morrow morning cut his throat and taking out his entrails, and stripping the two ladies naked, sew them into the horse, where having only their heads out, the rest of their bodies shall be imprisoned in his carcase. Then fix the stuffed beast on a gravelly stone, against the most fervent rays of the sun. Thus will all endure what you have rightfully determined of all; the horse, the death he has long ago merited, and they the biting of the wild beasts, when the worms shall gnaw their live bowels; the flames of burning, when the direct and furious beams of the sun shall beat on their heads; and the gallows and torments, when the dogs and birds of the air shall tear away their eyes and their entrails. In short, to sum up the account of their torments, alive they will enter the dead body of the beast, the stench of whose carcase will be a perpetual nosegay to their smell, and they shall perish piecemeal, and starve with a lingering fate, which they will have no hands at liberty to hasten by a desperate blow.

This barbarous speech was received with the general and noisy applause of the whole gang, who not only clapped their hands by way of approbation, but sent forth a volley of *huzzas* at the end of his speech. We had no reason to doubt of our fate next morning, and therefore resolved to prepare for it that night; when yet

to aggravate the malice of our fortune, especially that of the weeping *Camilla*, there rose up another, and spoke in the following manner, the hurry and noise being quashed to attend him.

My fellow soldiers and comrades, though I must allow the member who spoke last, to have come to the point, yet I cannot but offer my opinion, which I doubt not but will meet with a general approbation, because it tends to a general benefit. For our little state is not governed with so narrow a spirit as to suffer any one of us to have any regard to himself in competition with the good of the public. What I have to say is not to destroy what my brother has advanced, but only to propose some previous preparation to so solemn a fate. You all know, that our old woman has thought fit most decently to hang herself, and leave us destitute of any female to take care of this house, and prepare us our meals. Besides this, gentlemen, in the strictness of our justice we should sprinkle a little mercy. These two are, I suppose, at least seem to be maids, and it would be but manly, in some of us young fellows, to let them know what man is before they leave the world; and she that is most obsequious in the pleasure may be pardoned this execution, to serve us hereafter at bed and at board. One will be a sufficient instance of your justice, which will keep the survivor still in her duty. The pro-

posal I make, I hope my fellow soldiers, includes both pleasure and profit.

This proposal was but too agreeable to men who in the lustihood of their youth, having long thrown off all check of conscience, had nothing to curb their headlong desires, and I had that hour been the victim of their rage on the discovery of my sex, and *Camilla* of their lust, had not their wine and precedence confounded the event. As all were agreed to the rape and the murder, so every one thought himself the worthiest to lead the way in the lady's embraces. We were in appearance but two, and they above fifty. In this dispute the goblet went round, and as their blood warmed the contest grew higher, and immediate confusion had brought in destruction, had not *Philipizeno*, one of authority among them, parted the fray, and prevailed with them to determine nothing of the matter that night in their cups, but after kind sleep had restored their sound judgment, the morrow might put an end to their controversy, either by the death of both prisoners, or the precedence decided by lot.

This moderate advice of *Philipizeno* seeming reasonable, they all submitted to his opinion, and after some cups of reconciliation, each pigged to his pallet; *Camilla* and I, fast chained as we were left to sleep in our clothes, if sleep would vouchsafe to make us a visit. The alter-

ation of our fortunes from bad to ten times worse, had banished all the thoughts of those beautiful visions I had entertained myself with the night before: sighs, tears, and the chaste kisses of speedy fellow-sufferers wore out the night, which scarce afforded us the broken slumber of a moment for our refreshment.

CHAPTER VIII.

The arrival of one of the banditti with Scarpilegia, whom they unanimously choose for their captain, after he has given an account of his exploits and robberies in the Alps and in France. The cause of the ladies is revived; he adjudges them to be sold to the brothels of Turkey. The arrival of a friar, and his account of his love and the murders he committed for it. The destruction of the banditti, and the delivery of Fantasio and Camilla by the admirable stratagem of Baldinotti.

As soon as the dusky shades of night were withdrawn and the dawning morning began to brighten the skies, and the glorious chariot of the sun mounting aloft had spread his radiant beams all around, one of the gang of banditti arrives, as was plain from their mutual joy and satisfaction. After first salutations he pulled out a thousand crowns for the public stock,

which he having pillaged from travellers as he assured them, had sewed up in his clothes for convenience of carriage and security from discovery. Having disposed of his effects, he began to inquire after the rest of his comrades whom he found not then present, he was informed that they were fallen in the noble exploits of their vocation with honor and glory. On which he persuades them for a while to lay aside their nocturnal and diurnal excursions, and making a truce with their arms, to apply themselves providently to the recruiting their thin bands, and filling up those numbers which had been lost by the fortune of war. That they should consider, that a company of fresh-water soldiers will require some time to be perfect in discipline ; and that threats and force would list some, while others would become volunteers if they knew but the means of finding entertainment, and others might be won by promises and reward ; that there were not a few, who hating their servile life, under the tyranny of their lords or their masters would with joy join themselves to their gang. That he had for some time conversed with a young fellow in the flower of his youth, tall in his person, vast in his body, and strong in his limbs, and had prevailed with him to apply his hands, grown dull and heavy for want of use, to a more beneficial and provident office ; that he would enjoy while he could,

the advantage of good health, and not debase his robustness and vigor to the manuring of dirt which was given him, to wrest the ill-gotten treasures of the wealthy from their impious hands.

This discourse seemed highly reasonable to the company, who by a general vote depute the person who had been discoursing for the young fellow he had mentioned, resolving by the first means they could to fill up their number. Having for some time withdrawn, he returned bringing with him a lusty and beautiful youth, whose chin was but just covered with the very first down, excelling all the company in person and height ; for besides the proportionate bulk of his body, his head lifted itself up above all the rest. But his graceful body was but half covered over with rags of various colors and sorts ; his breast and his belly was thickest clothed with patches and rags. Coming into the company with a boldness undaunted, he thus addressed himself to them :

“ All hail ! ye brave clients and companions
“ of *Mars* ! and now, my faithful and loving
“ fellow-soldiers, I hope you receive a mind
“ resolved and bold into your brigade, with as
“ much joy as I join myself to it. I am a man,
“ gentlemen, who had rather take a wound in my
“ body than a purse in my hand : one who would
“ rather go with pleasure in the face of that
“ death, which is so terrible to others. Think

“ me not poor or abject, nor form your opinion of me by the appearance I make, nor judge of my virtue by my patches: for I have been at the head of a formidable band, and have laid waste whole provinces of *France*. I am a robber of no little fame about the *Alps*, and, though a native of *Naples*, the *French* have been sensible of the terror of my arms. I am that *Scarpilegia* at whose very name whole kingdoms have trembled.

“ I derive an hereditary virtue from my father, the great *Bonaccorsi*, a thief of illustrious memory; for, nourished in human blood and brought up in the very tents of the banditti, I proved the heir and rival of my father's virtue. But fate, that bears an arbitrary sway over all human things, by a capricious turn has robbed me, not only of my wealthy acquisitions, but of all my noble companions, who loved me as a brother, revered me as a father, and obeyed me as a commander. Flushed with a long series of success we thought nothing ought to stand against our assaults. But I must tell you all things in their due order.

“ There was a man eminent in the *French* court for his dignity and offices as well as the share he had in the favor of the King. Great power contracts envy, and malice, managed with cunning and address, often undermines

“ the most politic and fortunate. By means of
“ such as these, this noble person was thrown from
“ the favor of the King and sent into banishment.
“ His wife, a woman of uncommon fidelity and
“ singular modesty, (the mother of ten children) contemning the luxury of *Paris* and the
“ court, went the companion of his exile and
“ mate of his misfortune, in the disguise of a
“ man, cutting off her fine long hair, and sewing
“ into her clothes the best of her jewels,
“ intrepid in the midst of his guards with their
“ naked swords, not only sharing in all his dangers,
“ but ever preserving a watchful eye over
“ his safety, sustaining with more than a masculine courage the daily fatigues she was
“ obliged to undergo. After she had now passed
“ the difficulty of many days journey, she with
“ her husband lay at a village near *Antibes*,
“ where we ventured to make them a visit in the
“ night, and bear away all that they had of rich
“ and precious with them ; but not without
“ much hazard and danger. The lady was
“ alarmed at the first noise we made of breaking the chamber-door ; she filled the whole
“ house with her clamor and noise, calling to
“ the soldiers and her servants by name, and
“ summoning the neighbours to come to their
“ assistance ; but whether wine or fear restrained them I know not, we got off clear
“ without any damage.

“ Immediately the pious lady (for truth must
“ be spoken) singular in fidelity, and gracious
“ in good arts, returning to court, applied her-
“ self to the king, and obtained a speedy return
“ for her husband to *France* and his former
“ favor, with a full power to revenge our assault.
“ In short, *Lewis* would not that the glorious
“ band of *Scarpilegia* should continue, and so it
“ immediately found a fatal period; so much
“ can even the nod of a mighty prince perform.
“ The whole party being therefore surrounded
“ by soldiers were cut to pieces, I only escap-
“ ing the grisly jaws of death by stratagem,
“ more than bravery, in this manner: I had
“ just time to dress myself in a countrywoman’s
“ apparel, and sitting on a mule loaden with
“ wheat straw, I passed through the hostile
“ bands; for taking me for a poor trading
“ woman, my face being then not covered with
“ the least down to betray the imposture, they let
“ me pass freely through all their troops. Nor
“ did I lose any thing of my paternal or proper
“ glory, but rode through the points of my
“ enemies’ swords with the highest confidence
“ and intrepidity. But hid under the fallacy
“ of a habit not my own, by attacking the vil-
“ lages and country seats, I made shift to pick
“ up a tolerable viaticum.

“ Travelling through the heart of *France*, I
“ came into *Picardy*, and purchasing handsome

“ and cavalier accoutrements, as good clothes,
“ a fine horse, my pistols, and fusee, I took my
“ station in the road that leads from *Calais* to
“ *Paris*, much frequented by the English that
“ resorted to that metropolis of the Great Mo-
“ narch, for breeding or pleasure. The man-
“ ner of this passage, is either in the coach, by
“ the messenger, or the sash-marine. The last
“ being the poorest way of travel, afforded me
“ no motive of assault, and the coaches were
“ generally too well armed for one man’s attack.
“ How I managed the other you shall hear by
“ one adventure. There were at this time with
“ the messenger about fifty horse, every one of
“ which, give him such a price for provision
“ and horses between *Calais* and *Paris*, some
“ miles on this side of *Boulogne* I joined my-
“ self to them, and found them all armed with
“ pistols before them. However, I was resolved
“ not to let them pass without paying me some
“ toll, so that coming now into a wide and
“ lonely plain, I set spurs to my horse and in a
“ minute had got a quarter of a mile from them,
“ when turning about and cocking my fusee,
“ I told them they must either put me down
“ in such a place their two pistoles a piece, or
“ I would shoot among them. At first they
“ looked on me with a scornful smile, that could
“ presume that fifty such brave fellows should
“ be robbed by one man; but having discharged

“ my piece among them, turning my horse’s
“ head, I was in a moment at too great a dis-
“ tance for their pistols to reach me, and too
“ well mounted, to fear they could so much as
“ pursue me with such wretched jades as the
“ messenger generally furnishes his travellers
“ with, charging my fusee again, and riding
“ up to them, not yet able to bring them to
“ yield to my demands, I shoot the second time
“ among them and wound some in the legs
“ and others in the thighs ; for I shot with five
“ or six plugs at a time. Thus I renewed my
“ demands and execution, till consulting
“ among themselves about the inequality of
“ the fight, in which, while they all lay ex-
“ posed to my fire, they could none of them do
“ me any harm : they agreed to lay down two
“ pistoles a man, which, when they had rode far
“ enough from the place, I alighted, and took
“ up. Then like an arrow from a bow, I shot
“ into the woods.

“ This daring exploit alarmed the country ;
“ so disposing of my horse and accoutrements,
“ I purchased these rags, and by long and pain-
“ ful journeys got into *Italy*, and every where
“ improving my time, I at last fell into the
“ noble acquaintance who introduced me to
“ this valorous society.”

Then unbinding his patches and his rags,
he laid down before them above two thousand

crowns in gold. Behold, said he, I offer myself for your leader, if you think fit, and this small parcel of money as a donative on my inauguration; assuring you, that, in a little time, I will make this stone house of yours all of pure gold.

There was no delay in their resolution, nor debate of the matter, but all with one voice pronounce him their captain, bringing instantly to him a noble suit of clothes. Being thus reformed in his dress, and seated on their throne, they perform his inauguration with solemnly quaffing plentiful bowls. They begin his reign with an information against us, and a particular account of the several punishments proposed for our offence of endeavouring our escape. He demanding to see us, was conducted into our chamber, where turning short and throwing up his nose in contempt: he departed again. And being once more seated in his black chair of state, he began in this manner:

My fellow soldiers and brothers, said he, I would not have you imagine me so dull in my apprehension or so rash in my judgment, as to seek to disappoint the execution of your just decree; great statesmen having thought, especially in a government of violence, and depending on the will, that severity is the safest maxim to go upon. Yet I should sin against my honor and your confidence in me, and ever be haunted by

the stings of an ill conscience, should I hide, or conceal any thing that I have the least reason to think may be beneficial to our society. I shall, therefore, most earnestly desire you to be thoroughly convinced of a truth so inviolable, that I have the will to be serviceable to your cause, which to support I would let out all the blood in these veins; and you may besides, if my advice prove not agreeable, at last have recourse to the horse.

It is my opinion, gentlemen, that banditti, who rightly consider their affairs, ought to prefer nothing to their interest and gain, no, not even revenge, which too violently pursued has often been of fatal consequence to them as well as others. If, therefore, you fix these two virgins in the body of the horse, all the advantage you will reap from the execution will only be the fleeting gratification of your indignation, without any profit to the public treasury. In my opinion, gentlemen, we ought rather to carry them to some port or other, where we may sell them to some agent of the Ottoman bawds, who I have reason to believe will give a good price for two such young and beautiful maids: where being exposed in their brothels, they will not be able to make their escape, and will, in a life so full of contempt, give a more ample satisfaction to your revenge. This, gentlemen, is only my opinion, which my zeal for your profit could only wrest

from me, but you are and must be the best judges of your own resolves.

Thus by consulting the advantages of the rogues' coffers, the new chosen captain, by a happy address preserved us from sudden disgrace and ruin. Wherefore after a short consultation among themselves, they unanimously agree to the judgment of their leader, immediately untying our bands, and telling us the change of our destiny by his wisdom. *Camilla* seeing *Scarpilegia*, and hearing his sentence of the brothel, discovered her pleasure and satisfaction in her smiles and in her eyes. I could not but in myself condemn the whole sex for her sake, who so lately having acted so wonderful a grief, and a passion so violent, for the honorable consort of her chaste nuptial bed, could already betray a guilty delight in her doom to the sordid life in a brothel, pleased with the embraces of the circumcised infidels of *Turkey*. often did I curse my fear and my folly in losing so charming an opportunity of possession, when by her conduct I found the surprise might have proved as agreeable to her as it had formerly done to *Theresa*.

After a little pause to hear their resolves, the young leader thus began again : *This day being the first of my fortunate advancement, let us my fellow soldiers, indulge it in joy ; and over our liquor we will consult how to fill up our squadron*

the most speedy and effectual way. And I doubt not, but soon to have so powerful a brigade as shall make the adjacent country stand in awe of us ; great monarchies ere now having had less promising beginnings. If your stores of wine and provisions be low, make a draught of ten of your company, and marching to the next village I doubt not to bring you wine and good food in abundance. They pick out ten of the stoutest among them, and mounting their horses and taking their arms, they followed their leader with assurance of success in their eyes.

This party being gone, while the rest make up a good fire and put all their utensils in order for their feast, there comes to the gate of the castle a lusty young fellow dressed in the habit of a friar, and desires admittance about business of importance to their service. He being single could give them no fear ; being therefore admitted, he addressed himself to the company in this manner :

“ Though, gentlemen, I am a stranger to
“ your persons, your fame has drawn me hither
“ from parts something distant, with an ambitious desire of uniting myself to heroes so
“ noble, and so useful to my revenge and my
“ profit. Yes, gentlemen, I shall shew you
“ that I shall be yours in the securest band of
“ common interest. Know then, that I am a
“ *Franciscan* friar by my profession, for such

“ my parents were pleased to make me. I lived
“ in a convent of ours, in the pleasant country
“ of *Campania Felix*. Not far from this convent,
“ lived a gentleman of some quality and
“ wealth, whose avarice would not allow him
“ servants in proportion to his estate and de-
“ gree ; the only good qualities I know he had,
“ was a beautiful young wife, and a bigotry
“ to our order, to which he was very beneficial,
“ in hopes, by that means, to have a large share
“ in our good works, and our fasts, and our
“ prayers ; but those were a merchandize our
“ convent never dealt in. Among the many
“ jolly friars of our house, he was pleased to
“ have a particular regard to me, making choice
“ of me for his confessor, giving me full power
“ and authority over his family.

“ This cursed benefit which he bestowed was
“ the cause of my ruin, which nothing can re-
“ pair but my admission into your society, in
“ which I dare venture as far as any man of you
“ all. But to proceed in my story. This gen-
“ tleman had a wife the most beautiful of her
“ sex, and her charms received no small addi-
“ tion from her modesty. But what availed her
“ virtues, they only added fuel to my fire, till
“ unable any longer to bear a torture so insup-
“ portable as the violence of love in the midst
“ of despair, I resolved by the first law of na-
“ ture, to seek first my own preservation, and

“ since I could not live without possessing this
“ charming wife of my patron, I was resolved
“ no consideration or obstacle should hinder
“ my embraces.

“ Fate one day propitious to my vows, led
“ me to this house when the husband was ab-
“ sent, and designed to be so two or three days,
“ as his lady, on my inquiry, informed me,
“ telling me, that if I wanted any thing with
“ him, she would send a messenger to call him
“ back. I was not so desirous of his return ;
“ but quite distracted in my thoughts, I could
“ not conceal my confusion from her eyes,
“ but retiring into a court of the house, where
“ walking with the same agitation of body as
“ I had in my mind, she sent one of her maids
“ to me, to know if I wanted any thing, I told
“ her I did, and leading her to a private cor-
“ ner, with my dagger hid in my sleeve, in a
“ moment without noise I despatched her, in the
“ meanwhile a tenant of the gentlewoman’s en-
“ tering the court on horseback, with the rent
“ of his farm, and as soon as he alighted paid
“ his devotion to me, when instead of a bles-
“ sing I stabbed him to the heart, through the
“ back, and disposing him out of the way, I
“ locked the castle gate against any more such
“ intruders. The lady wondering her maid
“ staid so long sent another to inquire after
“ her: I answered her query by the same

“silencing dagger, and laid her with her
“fellow servant.

“None now being left in the house but
“the lady and myself, I went directly to her,
“and told her that I had long been languish-
“ing in a hopeless passion for her, but unable
“to support it any longer, the time now was
“come when she ought and must in justice
“reward all my sufferings, by yielding to my
“embraces. Surprised at my discourse and
“not crediting her ears, or doubting my
“reality, she replied in this manner: *Good*
“*father I am persuaded, (said she) that were*
“*I so lewdly inclined, you would be the first*
“*that would accuse my impiety.* I assured
“her of her mistake, and that nothing could
“give me a day’s life, without her. To con-
“vince her incredulity, I desired her to walk
“down into the court, to see what the fury
“of my love had performed. This sight so
“frightened her, that she scarce was able to
“get into the house, when falling on a chair
“she was some time in a swoon; but coming
“to herself, I bid her not be afraid, that her
“beauty was her protection, and merited more
“than *Helen’s* a thousand such bloody sacri-
“fices. Nothing can provoke my hand to do
“you any violence, but your obstinate resist-
“ance of my desires.

“With that pulling off my upper habit, I

“ took off a shorter, which I gave to the lady,
“ bidding her with the utmost despatch put it
“ on, least any bad accident should rob me of
“ that night’s joys in her arms. Fear made
“ her obey me and begin to undress her
“ head, but in so dilatory a manner as shewed
“ she hoped to gain time till somebody should
“ come to her rescue; but her fine length of
“ hair hanging now down her shoulders, I
“ was obliged to cut it off with my own hands,
“ since unfit for the cover she was to wear.
“ Now stripped to her shift, I could not but
“ press her charming body, though with some
“ struggle, and had not fear of interruption
“ and a desire of a more full and perfect en-
“ joyment prevented my immediate pleasure,
“ I had not been now without any satisfaction
“ for all I had done to compass it. But dread-
“ ing a surprise, I soon clothed her in the
“ less habit, like a novice of our order, and
“ clapping my own on again and taking in
“ my hand a long pole for use and defence,
“ I forced her from her house for fear of
“ the same fate her maids and tenant had
“ met with.

“ Thus got free from the house and out
“ into the road without any suspicion, it was
“ my ill fate to take that very road to our con-
“ vent by which her husband and his man
“ (having sooner despatched his business than

“ he expected) were coming full speed to his
“ own house. I discovered them at a distance,
“ and told her, that if she went not on before
“ me and cast not an eye towards him, I
“ would certainly stab her, before he could
“ rescue her. The husband drew nigh, and
“ asking me how I did, passed on without
“ any notice of my false brother before me;
“ but the man who usually entertained my
“ companion, friar *John*, took her for him;
“ and so with his wonted familiarity called
“ to the lady for him. She answering not a
“ word, he crossed her way and discovered,
“ unperceived by me, the tears in her eyes;
“ then spurring on his horse, he overtook his
“ master, and with much ado persuades him
“ to let him return and see whether it were
“ his wife or not, desiring him to wait there
“ the result of his inquiry. I heard the man’s
“ horse at my heels, and he calling as loud
“ as he could, friar *John*; concluding the
“ discovery made of my theft, I turned upon
“ him, and with a blow of my staff under the
“ ribs brought him from his horse and soon
“ cut his throat. The gentleman seeing what
“ passed, galloped up with much speed to rescue
“ his man and his wife; before he got up to
“ me I leaped up on my feet and received him
“ with my pole, bringing the last of my an-
“ tagonists to the ground, who being des-

“ patched, I might securely march off with
“ my prize; but he being down and I upon
“ him just ready to strike, being very strong,
“ he embraced me so hard in his arms about
“ the waist, that I had no force left to hurt
“ him, or even to hold the dagger in my hand,
“ which falling to the ground, his wife
“ snatched up, and gave me several stabs, till
“ tumbling down backwards, I cried out for
“ mercy, acknowledging all I had done for
“ her sake.

“ He was not willing to kill me on the
“ spot, but reserve me to a death more public
“ and infamous; so sending home his wife
“ to call her out-servants, he staid to watch
“ me till they came and conveyed me to the
“ prison in the city of *Capua*; upon exami-
“ nation I owned all the fact, and too openly
“ avowing my approbation of what I had done,
“ the inquest went so far, that a discovery was
“ made, and the fact plainly proved in the
“ court, that every friar in our convent had
“ some man’s wife or daughter, in the habit
“ of a novice, to solace himself with at his
“ pleasure. So the whores being dismissed, by
“ a tyrannic sentence we were all confined to
“ our convent, and that filled full of combus-
“ tible matter and then set on fire about our
“ ears, with large guards of soldiers and people,
“ that surrounded us, to hinder our escape.

“ There was in the cellar a conveyance of
“ water which went under ground to a pretty
“ large fountain in the next wood, I only of
“ all the fraternity thought of this little ap-
“ pearance of hope, either out of despair of
“ deriving any benefit from it, or by a forget-
“ fulness in the confusion they were in by the
“ near approach of destruction. I made with
“ all speed to this only hope, and it happened
“ that the spring being then low, the stream
“ was pretty shallow, but yet with the utmost
“ difficulty, and scarce with life, I got to the
“ fountain and so to the wood, where resting
“ till I was a little recovered and the dusk of
“ the evening grew on, with those jewels and
“ money I had rifled from the altars, I made
“ my way directly towards these mountains,
“ hoping there at least to continue unknown
“ till a happier opportunity of making my
“ escape. But hiding in a neighbouring vil-
“ lage your fame at once came to my ears, and
“ gave me fresh hope of my beautiful mistress
“ and ample revenge on the villain her hus-
“ band. I dare lead you out to infallible con-
“ quest, a lone house ill defended by servants,
“ having none but two maids and a man that
“ lie within it, and plentifully furnished with
“ silver and gold, of which I demand no share
“ for my pains, the profit be yours, and the
“ glory and the woman only be mine.”

By that time the friar had ended his story, and been welcomed by the gang, who were not a little pleased with his bloody narration, and that their tribe was now sanctified with a father of the church, the leader and his party return victorious, bringing in whole *borrachios* of wine and droves of cattle, and with them a poor old fellow who seemed to be their owner, and deplored his losses with so emphatic a grief that might well persuade us of the reality of the cause.

The leader entering, told his comrades that staid behind, that designing to plunder the neighbouring village, good fortune had thrown this old fellow in their way, with all that they wanted for present enjoyment. Then turning to the old man with a volley of oaths at his sorrows, bid him leave off grieving, unless he had a mind to take a trip down the precipice; giving him hopes, however, that if he assisted with alacrity at this singular festival, he might hope for his liberty on the morrow.

All hands fall to work, and the friar being introduced to, and received by the captain, undertook to be the chief cook; wherefore all things being now ready, they fall to their dinner, doubly prepared by good dressing and good stomachs, *You ought not, my brothers, to take me for your leader in expeditions abroad, but for your director in your pleasures at home. Sit to your*

dishes, and glasses, while I, being major domo, see every thing done, and served up in order. This said, he applied himself to the matter with so good an address, that he gave them a double *gusto* to his preparations, he broils and fries, and draws out their wine, and gives every thing so good a relish, that the rogues never were so nobly regaled in their lives.

We were placed in the kitchen, whither he so frequently repairing for the busy discharge of his office, had the opportunity of giving us both victuals and wine, of which I observed, he never gave us any but he tasted. *Camilla* discovered a pleasure in receiving every thing from him, and at last desiring to kiss her, she met his transported lips half way. Which, with what I had formerly observed, gave me an entire disgust to *Camilla*. What, said I to myself, have you already forgot the nuptials you so lately doated on, and the man, the loss of whom seemed to give your heart so many pangs, and who languishes for you with so unequalled a love? And can you prefer this bloody assassin, this barbarous stranger, to the husband provided for you by your tender father and mother? Does not thy conscience give thee a secret gripe for a falsehood so monstrous and unheard of? And are you so abandoned as to be pleased to play the whore among swords and muskets?—But while my mind was thus full of resentment

against *Camilla* and the whole sex, I by chance made a discovery which restored me my ease ; for by some words I overheard pass between them, I found that this was not *Scarpilegia* the banditti, the robber as he seemed, but the real *Baldinotti*, the betrothed of *Camilla*. And now having no dread of my presence, he delivered himself more clearly, saying to her, *be of good cheer my sweet Camilla, for you shall in a few minutes have all these your enemies in captivity.* Thus mingling a soporiferous potion in their liquor, they being already pretty full of the creature, they were all fast asleep but the old fellow that waited, the friar that cooked, and the banditti that had introduced *Baldinotti* for their leader.

While the friar, and the other two bound all the rogues, *Baldinotti* and *Camilla* flew into one another's arms, and the heat of the first ecstasy being over, he told her that ever since she had been ravished from him, he had been contriving this happy delivery ; that the banditti who introduced him had been a servant in his family, and corrupted by evil company he had fallen into the gang, but lying in wait he surprised him, and on assurance of his pardon and a handsome provision, he had promised to do what he had performed ; however, for fear he should not be sincere, he had engaged his friend *Costaguti* to come without his know-

ledge in the manner he had done, having formed that bloody story merely to render him more agreeable to the rogues: who now being all fast bound, *Baldinotti*, *Costaguti*, the old servant (whom he had ordered to be there ready to be taken) and the penitent banditti, took care of us both, and the cargo of money that belonged to himself, and conveyed us all to *Fundi*, to his house. The whole city on notice, like one man, came out to meet us, with votive oblations for the safe return of *Baldinotti* and his mistress; the pomp was made up of both sexes and all ages; her parents ran first to catch her in their arms, succeeded by her relations, and friends, and followers, joy in every eye riding triumphant, and transport spreading over every face.

While *Camilla* was in her nuptial apartment, caressed and welcomed by her friends, *Baldinotti*, and a detachment from the magistrates, marched back to the fortress of the banditti, whom they found faster yet bound in the chains of the wine, than those they had confined them to before their departure. Their prizes brought forth, and every thing produced, the rogues thrown, some down the precipice by *Baldinotti*, and others beheaded with their own swords, all the beasts they had there being laden with the fruits of their rapine, they all returned by midnight to *Fundi*. The treasures

of the rogues being delivered to the custody of the public, and the honest banditti forgiven and rewarded, *Baldinotti* having taken his good-night of his bride, went to bed, in order to rise the next morning to take full possession of his beloved *Camilla*.

CHAPTER IX.

Fresh troubles of Fantasio, and his flight from Fundi in a chest. The story of Julia Gonzaga, with Barbarossa, and the Duke of Mantua. Fantasio's arrival at Malfi, and passage to the house of Camilla's tenant, a great witch in the high mountain called Monte Marso.

I SHALL not detain you with a tedious description of the pomp and solemnity of the marriage of the two lovers. Let it suffice, that the nuptial knot the next day was tied in the cathedral church, whither, to my misfortune, I attended her; being returned home, and the magnificent dinner being over, and the happy lovers triumphing with mutual joy, on their past fortunes in an inner-room, I happened on some occasion to pass into another, that faced the quadrangular market-place, and to my no small terror heard the *public crier of the town* under the very window, declaring a reward of two hundred crowns for any one that would discover one Signor Fantasio, a dwarf to Cardinal Can-

telmi, *fled from him in woman's clothes of such a color and silk, provided he be delivered safe into the Cardinal's hands.*

This was an alarm too dreadful to leave me any room for my share of the public joy of the day, I had been seen at the cathedral in the very clothes, I had heard of the Cardinal's resentment, and was too sensible of what force a reward so considerable would be on the minds of so many as must have seen and observed me; all which concurring dangers, scarce left me any prospect of safety from the power and diligence of my pursuers, not doubting but that my apprehension would be as certain as my death would be after it.

I had on my right cheek a small blushing mole, not very unlike a wood-strawberry, which being by the crier as particularly described as my clothes, I could not long expect to remain undiscovered. All the glimpse of comfort that I had, was, that the authority of *Baldinotti* in the town, might afford a kind interval from the insults of a people covetous of the reward. Necessity, therefore, compelling me to make an entire confidence of my whole affair to *Camilla*, I resolved to lose not one moment before I sought her protection in my distress.

The house had been too busy in the pomp and preparations of the nuptial-day, to hear or mind anything of the crier. Full of fear and

concern, I entered her room, and found her in the lap of her bridegroom; for their love was too strong to suffer the least separation or distance. I made an apology to the happy lovers for presuming to interrupt their dearer satisfaction, by begging *Camilla's* ear for a moment, on business of the last consequence to my affairs. She left *Baldinotti's* arms with all the grace in the world, while she made her love give place to her civility, and retired straight with me to her cabinet. Where I told her, as briefly as possibly I could, the whole story of my past life, all the present distress my ill fate had reduced me to; and throwing myself at her feet, I implored her pardon for not letting her know me before, and protection and assistance in my immediate escape, that if the necessity of my fortune had compelled me into any crime which I could not with prudence have avoided, she was too generous and good to exercise her resentment on a wretch already undone.

Camilla reflecting what had past between us, and what I had seen, and how near the same bed had admitted me to her, blushed all over with so charming a confusion that doubly heightened her beauty and modesty. But, considering the necessity that obliged me to secrecy, and the continence which for all she knew, I perfectly preserved, and the present extremity of my affairs, she suffered her generosity to vanquish her anger. The seeing *Diana* naked cost *Ac-*

teon his life ; but the *Venus Camilla*, did not think I deserved so rigorous a revenge, she would indeed believe me sufficiently punished for my curiosity, had she known the pain and agony it cost me. But ignorant of my crime, she dealt with me as innocent, and therefore resolved to take effectual care of my security from the Cardinal's indignation ; whom, with a family hatred, she perfectly abhorred. She took care immediately to set things in order, to have me conveyed to a tenant of her's, not far from *Amalfi* in the *Basilicate*.

But this being some days' journey, I had reason to fear a discovery in any disguise, should I travel the usual road, or in the public manner. But she soon removed all my fears by this happy invention : she had a servant in the house, in whom she could put a particular confidence, and putting me in a large trunk, with holes made for me to breathe freely through, commits me to his charge, to carry me safe in that manner to the place she designed. He fixing me on the ablest of *Baldinotti's* sumpter horses, that no time might be lost, before the dusk of that very evening I set out of *Fundi*, in as great fear and consternation as *Julia Gonzaga* had done thence, before, from the fury of *Caradin Barbarossa*, admiral to the *Grand Signor Solymán*, afterwards King of *Algiers*, who being in the *Mediterranean* with his fleet, and having information by his spies, that this

Julia Gonzaga, widow to *Vespasian Colonna*, and the most beautiful woman in the world, lived then in this city of *Fundi*, landed his men in the night, and sent them to seize her in bed, resolving to make a curious present of her to his master, *Solyman*. She had only just time to leap out of her bed, and in nothing but her linen, rode away with full speed from the pirate, and even escaped so very narrowly, that had she stayed to put on so much as a petticoat, she had for ever put off her liberty in the *Seraglio*. *Barbarossa* being thus disappointed of his beautiful prize, plundered and burnt the town, and carried abundance of the people away into captivity.

But what terror soever she expressed of the *Seraglio*, and the embraces of the *Grand Signor* in this flight, yet the event shewed that her aversion was not to *man*, but constraint, for the young Duke of *Mantua* found her more complaisant to his desires. His masculine charms had too great a sympathy with her feminine beauties, to be long in establishing an amorous commerce. But there is a temper so fickle in youth, and a satiety so cloying often follows the enjoyment of the finest woman in the world, that the fair have still found it more difficult to retain *one* heart in constancy and obedience, than to conquer a *thousand*. Whether the appetite of the mind be akin to that of

the body, or whether woman be like some pictures, that cannot bear too near a view without disgust, though so charming at a distance. Women indeed, (I speak in general) are like the temples of the *Ægyptians*, without, all magnificence and harmony, within, the god that animates it, an ass, a cow, a rat, or an onion; or like the apples near the *Asphaltic Lake*, beautiful to the eye, but fill your mouth with ashes if you taste them.

Thus it happened with *Julia Gonzaga*, in the pride of her charms; for a sudden indifference in the Duke at once humbled and provoked all her vanity, till now quite satiated to disgust, he entirely forsakes her for the less meritorious charms of some other. An affront so opprobrious to a spirit so haughty, so full, and so vain of the fame of her beauties, must naturally produce a resentment equal to the pride of the person thus slighted; which having no bounds, drove it to a barbarous cruelty beyond all measure. The past sweets of that soft passion, that had compelled the surrender of her honor, soured now her tender sentiments into the most inveterate hatred, and starting from the extremity of love in excess, she fell into an aversion so strong, as produced the following inhuman *catastrophe*.]

Her revenge is resolved on, but the means to obtain it uncertain; for without her admission into his company it only remained in her will.

But her beauties, which had given rise to her ruin, soon furnished the means and instrument of revenge. Her confessor had long been in love with her in vain, while the Duke was possessor of her heart ; but finding that amour at an end, took courage from the visible slights of the Duke to declare and press the success of his passion. *Julia*, though disdaining the arms of a priest after those of a Prince, yet made her resentment give way to her thirst of revenge ; so seeming to indulge a passion she scorned, she at last assured him of whatever he would ask, after he had procured her but one interview with the Duke in her apartment. Nothing is so difficult, or impossible which a priest will not overcome in the chase of his lust or his interest. Thus this priest, by all the subtle arts of the gown, surmounted the Duke's disgust, and brought him to her chamber, pretty well prepared for a relapse into a passion he had now almost forgot. The priest left them alone, and retiring into the next chamber full of, and all on fire with, the gay and wanton ideas of the fair one he was to possess, with impatience he waited the end of the visit.

The Duke, on his entrance, found her in an agreeable dishabille, her languishing eyes half drowned in her tears. The sight of such beauty in sorrow, gave a secret pang to the false wanderer's heart, as conscious of the guilt of those pains his desertion had given her. But when she began to reproach his ingratitude and igno-

ble inconstancy, in a manner the most touching and pathetic in the world, the fire of her eyes, the music of her tongue, the symmetry of her person, the graces of her action, and the tender rage of her passion, not only revived the old flame in his bosom, but made it burn out with more fury and violence than ever. He owned his past crimes with all the agreeable confusion of hopeless desire, threw himself at her feet, embraced them with a lover's eagerness, and the agony of a sincere penitent : he begged ten thousand pardons, and sent out as many oaths of future fidelity, and present love to that degree, that a remission of her rage could only save him from immediate death, which he owned he could not expect but from goodness and mercy, equal to her beauty.

After an infinite number of sighs, vows, and oaths of perpetual constancy, she seemed to relent ; but shewing some doubt even still of his sincerity, she told him he could give her but one proof of his love, which was *in plain terms, to renounce God himself for her* ; which when the wildness of his passion had done, she, the very moment that he uttered the impious blasphemy, stabbed him to the heart : who falling down all bloody at her feet, while his closing eyes seemed to upbraid her infernal severity, not satisfied with the death of his body, without making sure of that of his soul. This horrid revenge being performed, she calls

in the priest, and telling him what she had done, owned her last promise to him for furnishing her with the means of so ample a satisfaction. Then with the same dagger, reeking yet with the Duke's blood, she pierced her own bosom, saying, *Thus I perform my word, while I leave my body in your power to use at your pleasure,* and so sunk down on the body of the Duke.

The inhuman revenge, I suppose, had abated the appetite of the amorous priest; unless he had the abominable gust of the abandoned *Matalesti*.

From *Fundi* we went to *Mola* by the *Via Appia*, made at the proper expense of *Appius Claudius*, a Roman patrician, in his consulship. It is five days journey long, and broad enough for two carts to meet and pass without difficulty; and is paved all over with black flint-stones, as big as two men can carry, and laid so close together, that they have held these eighteen hundred years. The frequent passing of the horses and mules, for so long a tract of time has made it so smooth and shining, that the sun reflecting on it, you may see it glitter like a highway of silver at two miles distance.

We passed through *Mola* directly to *Gacta*, where leaving our horses, we took shipping for the *Basilicate*; and passing *Naples* at a distance, we arrived with all the speed and

safety, that we could expect or desire, for by this little voyage by sea, we cut off the scent of our eager pursuers. Passing through *Mulfi*, we made our direct way to *Monte Marso*, that from its stupenduous height overlooks the city, the country, and the sea ; on which to cast your eyes from its summit, would make you perfectly giddy with the distance.

This mountain was formerly a great resort of robbers ; but severity and care have cleared them of banditti, though all their rigid laws and executions, cannot clear them of witches, who here are in some number, as well as in very great perfection in all the amazing mysteries of the black art ; which yet they conceal as much as possibly they can, for fear of the terrors of the *Inquisition*. Though they come not up to what was fabled of the old witches of *Thessaly*, as raising the dead, removing whole cities, bringing down the moon and stars from the firmament, and suspending the earth in their places ; yet can and do with wonderful ease and address, transform themselves, and whomsoever they please, into what figures and forms they think fit, as I can prove by my own experience.

CHAPTER X.

On Fantasio's arrival at Invidiosa ; the wonders he discovers ; the magical music he heard in the night : the song sung by the spirits. The old witch comes to bed to him : his terror and pains on it ; and after surprise, when in his embraces she changes into a beautiful young lady.

LAZARETTO, (for that was the name of Camilla's servant) in the last discharge of the trust his lady had reposed in him, conveyed me in my cage to a neat little house, which fenced round from the weather by various sorts of trees, stood on the brow of a precipice about the middle of this mountain. Having entered this solitary mansion, I was soon set free from my narrow captivity, and received at my enlargement by the lady of the house, whose figure, my safety and joy for the end of so tiresome a journey, could not yet render agreeable. She seemed with age and weakness bent almost double ; her head and her arms trembled with the palsy ; from her eyes there fell a salt rheum, that had eaten gutters down her cheeks, while her mounting shoulders, in an irregular orb overlooking her head, seemed a burthen too great for legs so feeble to support.

First compliments over, and the door being

shut, *Lazaretto* tells her his commission, laying before her the confidence his lady put in her, and to encourage her fidelity, she had sent her a release of her whole year's rent for the service. I was as surprised at *Camilla's* generosity as the old woman was overjoyed at her bounty. After a short repast, *Lazaretto* returning the same way to *Fundi*, I dismissed him with a thousand thanks to his lady, and assurances of perpetual gratitude, and as ample a reward as my little exchequer would allow. Weary as I was with the fatigue of so long and incommodious a journey, the wretched appearance of my hostess, all patches and rags, and the first room of our entertainment, made me really afraid of asking for my bed, till the drowsy god of sleep usurping my eyes, discovered the necessity of a speedy repose.

Invidiosa (for that was the name of the hostess) soon perceived my wants, and guessing my fears, took me by the unwilling hand, with a little more vigor than her appearance seemed to promise, and leading me up stairs, surprised me with a very neat and pleasing apartment, furnished *a la Romana*, modish and cleanly. She easily perceived this satisfactory surprise, and told me I was come to a place fertile of greater wonders than these, as I should soon discover, if I made any stay in this retirement.

As feeble as she seemed, she was very busy in undressing me, and having reduced me to my shift, she left me to my bed. The extreme civility of my hostess, her officious attendance, and frequent tender squeezes, gave me cause to suspect that fortune was raising another persecution of my tranquillity, by the amorous dotage of so disgustful a monster, from whom the necessity of my affairs denied me a retreat. How to deliver myself with safety to my friends at *Otranto*, whence, by their assistance, I might soon get out of the power of the Cardinal, so took up my thoughts, tossing and tumbling from one side to the other, that sleep with the auxiliaries of the hour and my lassitude, could not vanquish my cares.

Good part of the night being past in this tumult of thought, my ears on the sudden were agreeably invaded with a concert of flutes, and the sweetest voice I ever heard in my life. The most celebrated voices and instruments of *Rome*, fell infinitely short of this wonderful harmony, which was not more charming than amazing in the midst of so wild a solitude, and in the house of so lonely and miserable a creature. If sleep before hovered at a distance over my eyes, a serenade so unexpected and transporting, drove it quite away, while my soul was collected in my ears in the most profound attention, with fear and

delight. The words of the song directed to pleasure, and lulling the emotions of the anxious mind, were as follow :

SONG.

1

*Happy youth thy fears dismiss,
And prepare, prepare to prove
All th' extremes of coming bliss :
All the soft extremes of love.
Youth and beauty now invite you,
To dissolve in melting pleasure :
Youth and beauty shall delight you,
With all their joys, with all their treasure.
Indulge the raptures and your hours possess !
In ecstasies of smiling love's excess.*

2

*Wanton Zephyr's love inspire,
While they fan the whispering trees :
Present Cupid lights the fire ;
Present beauty gives thee ease.
Happy pair indulge the blessing,
Damp no joy with needless rigor :
While securely you're caressing,
Raise the bliss with mutual vigor.
Your murmurs softer than the turtles prove,
Than Conches more close, your kisses when you love :
And when around your curling arms you twine,
More strict embraces, give, than ivy or the vine.*

The gloomy darkness that was spread over my room, as soon as the song was over was

dispersed in a moment, by the entrance of four little cupids with tapers in their hands, and bows and quivers at their backs, introducing the odious *Invidiosa*, made yet more disgusting by her gay air, and a dress rich and genteel. With a fond but detestable smile she drew to my bed, the curtains being thrown open by her abominable imps. I shivered all over with horror and aversion, dreading her touch as the devil's, whose perfect resemblance she bore. Approaching me gently, she seized on my hand and conjured me to banish all fear and apprehension, being secure from all harms in the defence of her *love*; to which I should not only owe abundance of pleasure, but my safety and deliverance from evils that threatened me. *I confess*, (said she) *that my person is not so inviting as the Cardinal's niece, yet believe me, I can impart joys far more transporting, without that fickle inconstancy you found in Theresa.*

I was yet more confounded at the name of *Theresa*, in the barbarous mountains of the *Basilicate*, and that, from a person that I could not imagine more acquainted with my affairs than I was with hers. This gave me cause to imagine that I was fallen into the hands of a witch, and therefore ought to be as cautious of listening to her enticements as *Ulysses* was to *Circe's* or *Calypso's*. But not armed with

his virtue and resolution, I found myself more inclined to follow the example of his companions, though my fate proved like theirs. For I considered that, being now wholly in her power, I ought to be cautious of provoking her rage by a slight of her passion, which often drives women of more innocent principles to all the impious rage of unbounded revenge. My inclinations were further corrupted by my guilty desire of inquiring into the strange mysteries of the black art; a great skill in which, has been attributed to men of some religion and virtue, among whom *Albertus Magnus* seemed to authorise my curiosity.

In the midst of these thoughts, the cupids having thrown open my bed, and *Invidiosa* her garments aside, she laid herself by me, when ordering her little dæmons to set the tapers on the table and withdraw, she flew into my arms with such force and desire as relished more of the spring of gay youth than her winter of age. I wished, for my own sake, the lights had been away, that so visible a forbiddance of the joys she required being away, and imagination supplying her defects with foreign charms, I might have been able to shew myself a man in a battle so dreadful. But her cruelty seemed to exceed that of the tyrants of old, who joined the dead to the living, by obliging my eyes still to view the corpse that lay

by me, with her looks disappointing those enjoyments her embraces implored.

Why so cold? Why so cold? (said she) to love so warm, as mine? Have we already changed our years before we have our souls, while an odious icy impotence congeals thy blood, when mine flows hot and fiery as youth? Where is that vigor so endearing to the Cardinal's niece? Weak and sickly is that appetite that is kept up with cordials, while a stomach strong and robust digests the coarsest food. Rouse, rouse up your manhood, nor basely turn your back in the day of combat. If desire be wanting, let pity prevail, and by a tender embrace save the life of your protectress.

Ashamed of myself I desired the curtains might be drawn, that darkness might give me that courage which the tapers destroyed. She denied my reasonable request, with the assurance that so I should rob myself of the greatest part of the joy I should receive from so strange a *metamorphosis*, as my caresses would produce.

To this a mutual silence ensued, and our invisible concert began a melody so enchanting, that it warmed my blood and gave me courage, (though with my eyes shut) to throw myself at once into her old withered arms. Strange miracle of magic, in that moment I found

delights so transporting, that words cannot express ; having never felt such before with the most charming of the sex, and now in full possession of the joy, without fear of disappointment, I opened my eyes, when most agreeably surprised, I found in my bosom, instead of an old, withered, paralytic hag, a lady young and blooming, and every way most charming in body and face, full of eager love, clasping, curling, twining, murmuring, expiring, in all the wild ecstasy of pleasure.

This added to my wonder as much as my joys, giving me a double return of that appetite, which her former horrid figure had utterly destroyed. She was sensible of the change, and smiling, asked me if I would now have the curtains drawn, or suffer the tapers any longer to give me a sight so disagreeable ? *Never let darkness, said I, come between this goddess form and my eyes ! But tell me, thou Circe most charming, whence this sudden and wonderful change ? What swift Medean art could revive this blushing morning of youth, from that shutting evening twilight of decrepit old age ? From deformity most shocking, to beauty more than earthly ? If I have found any favor in your heart ; if Fantasio has any pretence to the continuance of a blessing which his miserable fortunes could never have expected, ease his*

laboring mind, satisfy his reasonable curiosity, let him know whether he be yet in a rapturous dream, or whether it be in your divine art to restore it, as often as his amorous soul should desire it.

After the heat of our dalliance had given a cessation to our warfare, *Invidiosa* related her strange story in this manner, while all the graces of utterance, and harmony of voice attend on her words.

CHAPTER XI.

The history of Biancha Pamfili or Invidiosa. Her marriage to a Franciscan friar. The discovery of his treachery. Her retreat to Monte Marso. Her study of magic and its defence.

BELIEVE me, my pretty *Fantasio*, were not fate more thy enemy than *Biancha*, you should spend all your life in pleasures, like those you have so lately had a taste of: but thy destiny, I find, is to wander about the world a long while, without any settled abode of continuance. But I will arm thee with art, as far as I am able, against the cursed influence of a dark malignant planet that menaces thy

ruin ; but of that hereafter, when the intervals of pleasure allow us a calm of prudence to weigh things as we ought. I shall now only give you a short abstract of my history, and origin of those wonders you are now so surprised at.

I derive myself from the noble family of the *Pamfili*, a house sufficiently illustrious in *Rome*. But my father being of the younger branch, and too extravagant in his expenses, left my mother and myself but seven thousand ducats for our maintenance and my dower. That fortune, however, had been enough to have married me genteelly, had not the villany of two *Franciscan* friars at once put an end to my hopes as well as happiness.

My mother had always been a mighty devotee to the *Franciscan* friars ; and her confessor was then of that order, when my unhappy beauty happened to wound a young jolly friar studying in that convent at that time. My mother was often wishing that her confessor would recommend some pretender to my love ; not doubting but one of his recommendation would make us both happy. After she had often pressed him to this office, and having agreed of the villany with his brother *Bernardo*, in his visit to my mother, the same discourse arising, he thus applied himself to her, with all the cunning and impious address so bad a cause required ;

but he needed not to have been so very artificial, my mother being too well prepared to receive all he said for gospel.

I am fully persuaded (said he) that God has sent his angel Raphael to me as he did to Tobias, to direct me to a good husband for your daughter. For you may assure yourself that I have met with the most honest and worthy young gentleman in Italy, who having often seen your daughter at our church, in spite of her veil, is infinitely in love with her beauty and person. As I was this day saying my office, the poor soul came to me sent by God himself, to show me what great desire he has that this match should go forward; and knowing his family, his honesty, and merits perfectly well, I promised him to break the matter to you.

This was the hypocritical and impious preface this holy confessor made to my mother, which he heightened by the following necessary caution, against our discovery of the deceit:—*I must confess, my ghostly daughter, (said he) there is one fault at least, in his fortune, which I will not conceal from you, that you may make the fairer judgment of the matter, and regulate your conduct by what I shall unfold.—A dear friend of his was set on by his enemy, on which drawing his sword to part them, he could not prevent running his sword through his body and killing him on the spot. Though he struck*

not a blow, nor made any pass, yet being in the company when the murder was committed, he has been forced to fly his country, by the advice of his friends, till they have secured his pardon, which they will speedily effect. In the meantime, he retreated to Rome, living here incognito, in the garb of a scholar, as the safest disguise. If, therefore, you approve of the man, the marriage must be secret, and he must in the day-time follow his lectures, and at night return home to your house, till a speedy end is put to his trouble.

It is easy to deceive those who have no deceit, especially when bigotry and devotion prepare the way. A perfect faith in what he said, made my mother not question the truth of his plausible tale. She immediately laid her injunctions upon me to admit his addresses and yield to be his wife with the utmost speed, the excess of his passion admitting no delay. I had not then placed my affections on any other man, or troubled myself much about *love* or *marriage*. My book had been always my principal delight, and too much employed all my time to let my thoughts ramble in the pleasing mazes of *Cupid*.

Bernardo was introduced, urged his passion very handsomely, had a person agreeable, discovered some learning and wit, which with me always weighed more than form or dress :

in short, at a private mass we were married ; the two friars and our family being the only witnesses of the detestable nuptials.

As his passion was real, his good humour continued, and we lived together for some time, to our mutual satisfaction ; and I was content to share him with his studies, allowing the day to those, and the night to myself. My mother was infinitely pleased with the match, and said, she had reason to bless God and her good confessor for a happiness we had not else obtained. But that devotion to the *Franciscans*, that had betrayed me to ruin, was the means of the fatal discovery of my misfortune : for going with my mother to mass, at their convent, we came in just after one was begun. We had not kneeled long, when he turning about to say, *Dominus vobiscum*, I was surprised and confounded to find him my husband. I whispered my mother, that he was either my husband or one so very like him as might excuse the error of my mistake. My mother still full of her opinion of the order, and thinking it a mortal sin to entertain such wicked thoughts of such holy men, endeavoured to persuade me out of my opinion. He turned again on the same occasion, which confirmed my fears, and alarmed my mother with suspicions of the same nature. But *Ite Missa est*, removed all our doubts, at least mine, who

was better acquainted with his face. My mother, indeed, seemed not yet to yield an entire credit to her eyes, till the evening put it beyond controversy. When being in bed with me, my mother, according to our agreement, held his hands, as in sport, whilst I pulled off his night-cap, we discovered his shaved crown, which too plainly confessed the treacherous priest.

Full of rage I leaped from the bed ; and both running out of the chamber locked him in till we had consulted of our revenge. My mother would not let me follow the violent dictates of my resentment ; but thought it would be punishment enough to them and ignominy to their order to have them committed to the secular judge. She therefore, under pretext of some earnest business of importance, sent for her confessor, and secretly for officers to secure their persons, which, as soon as he came, she put in execution and followed her cause close, till the judge delivered them over to the bishop, and he only imposed the penance on them of not saying mass in two months ; so that, by my mother's moderate counsel, all we got by the prosecution, was the discovery of my disgrace, and the security and impunity of the offenders.

On the knowledge of this roguery of the friars, grief seized too strongly on the spirits

of my mother, and the shame of having been the wife of a priest, too much affecting me in *Rome*, gathering up the shipwreck of our fortunes, we took care to convey all our furniture and substance to *Amalfi* where my ignominious fate was unknown. But sorrow had taken too fast a possession of my mother to suffer time and place to heal up the evil, so after a short abode at *Malfi*, the disorder that had for some time been devouring her, put a period to her life.

I will not trouble thee with a needless repetition of my grief for this loss; let it suffice that it was answerable to the love and goodness of so tender a mother. Weary of the world already, this heightened my aversion, till chance leading me to this pleasing retirement, in my inquiries after such a blessing, I soon agreed with the seemingly wretched possessor *Invidiosa*, (whose name and person I here yet preserve) I removed my furniture and fortune to this place, where I gave myself entirely to the study of those books which the friar left behind him, which treated particularly of all the hidden mysteries of the magical art. But some parts were so very obscure, that all my industry and study could never have vanquished the difficulty, had I not had the luck to be in the house of the sage *Invidiosa*, a woman profoundly learned in that

wonderful science ; who, finding my inclinations so strongly bent on that study, took care not only to explain the difficulties of my own books, but to make me mistress of her curious manuscripts which had carried the art to its utmost perfection ; and which, at my leisure, my dear *Fantasio*, I will freely communicate to your curiosity.

I confess, interrupted I, my curiosity is very strong to things of that nature, were I but satisfied of their innocence and consistence with our faith and religion.

You labor, my dear angel, (replied she) under a vulgar error, when you imagine human nature so depraved, as to be able to make a compact with the devil, and renounce the comforts of a God, that they, in the very fact, know to be his master. No, no, whatever the superstitious and ignorant believe, the art of magic is a noble and celestial art, discovering the secret powers of things, plants, drugs, minerals, the whole animal and vegetable kingdoms, and all the metallic realms in the earth ; the just application of *actives* and *passives*, the influence of the planets, the nature of the elements, the knowledge of the infinite number of their invisible inhabitants, the natural ways of obliging or compelling them to our pleasure or service, which must be adapted to the nature of their elements,

and we must know whether the business be fit for an *aereal*, *igneous*, *aquatic* or *terrene* spirit. For none of them are such enemies to man as voluntarily to do him any mischief, and most of them averse to the offices of revenge, though they participate generally of the nature of their element, whether fire or water, the earth or the air; but all are obsequious to the children of art, who know how to reward them with delights proportioned to their perception.

By our skill in these things it is that we can alter our shape and appearance, transform the old into youth, and youth into old age, the human shape into those of birds and beasts, and those again into the form of man. By this art, we can thicken the thin substance of *aereal* or *igneous* spirits, clothing them in more substantial bodies than they naturally enjoy, and by which they may be more useful to our pleasure or service. By this means they can express both vocal and instrumental sounds; but to far greater perfection than the human organs allow, yourself have been a witness how far their music excels all the throats of the *eunuchs* of *Italy*.

You charm me, my adorable *Biancha*, (said I) with your wonderful account of these wonders of nature; hid from the presuming pedants of the schools and the system-mongers

of the *virtuosi*, and discovered to the generous inquiries of a tender young lady, whose beauty of person might well excuse the barrenness of the mind, and aversion to studies so difficult and sublime.

The world, (replied she) that is, the domineering part, has always been an enemy to the progress of knowledge, and those great *genius's*, who have made rational discoveries, have often been martyrs to the excellence of their understanding. Thus the very proposal of the *antipodes*, in an ignorant age, called down an *anathema*, though now it be a truth that nobody denies. *Gallileo*, *Campinella*, and other great men have endured the tortures of the inquisition for imparting that knowledge which their studies had found out. What clamor and opposition did the *Copernican* system meet with? when now all but coxcombs allow it, and which I have frequently seen with my eyes verified when I have passed above our atmosphere, and viewed it with equal pleasure and wonder. Nay, the very mechanic performances, powers, and motions have been blackened with the invidious name of necromancy and witchcraft. Friar *Bacon* of *England*, and even *Albertus Magnus* have fallen under this censure. You have seen the petty performances of the common chymical receipts; what magical words they will raise in

their vials. You have seen *Diana's* tree from a mixture of silver, mercury, and *aqua fortis*, branch itself from its seed, as it were, into a perfect arborous form, the same is done by plants; what is done by the various productions of light and a hundred other infant efforts of the imperfect students of magic or nature? If what they produce be momentary, unsubstantial, and useless, it is because they know not the true and secret way of operation, which is a mystery above the vulgar; and being only confined to a few, and those obscure and unknown, the fools of figure and power strike in with the mob, (being equally qualified with knowledge and understanding) to stigmatize this art as the product of hell and the converse with the devil.

Have you never seen, by the help of a microscope, that every little leaf is inhabited by certain little animals, though too minute for the eye without its help to discover? Nay, we ourselves are only the habitable world to some animalcules, which you may discover by a microscope, pass in and out at the pores of our hands or other parts. If then this world, this earth, which seems so well replenished with visible animals, abounds in such infinite numbers of those that are invisible, is it reasonable to imagine the vast expanse one perpetual desert, without any inhabitants? It is contrary to reason,

and contrary to the experience of the learned. These spaces of the air are possessed by myriads of subtle spirits ; some within our *atmosphere*, some beyond it, but all communicative of their assistance to man ; and, by the help of art, man can enable them to do what else they are incapable of. These spirits I employ, these I converse with, and use in my farther discovery of nature. I have one my particular friend and never far from me, warning me of dangers, and ministering to my pleasure and instruction. The *dæmons* of *Socrates* and *Aristotle*, of *Cordan* and other great men, were no other but these friendly spirits. The *Adepti* converse with them with something more safety, though with not so great familiarity, as we who have made their nature our study, and arrived at such perfection in art as to be able to furnish them with rewards for their pains, which they long for but cannot get without us.

By what I have said, you will find that we, whose study is to converse with all the wonders of the creation, cannot be so forgetful of the Creator as to renounce the bright cause of all we enjoy, for a blind vassalage to the lowest of creatures.

I bless my misfortunes, divine Biancha, (said I) that brought me to the knowledge of so much beauty of mind and person in one woman. You cannot then be content with the blessing

of my mind (interrupted she) in the person of *Invidiosa*? Should I resume that form, I am persuaded your raptures would soon grow more weak.—No, (replied I) could you take one yet more ghastly, your idea is too strongly fixed in my mind, not to make me adore you in any figure. Well, experience will shew (said she) whether my person or mind be more dear to you. In the meanwhile, I will make an end of my history, which this digression had made you forget.

On the death of this learned *Invidiosa*, being arrived to so great a proficiency in the art, I assumed her form, both to secure my retreat and my fortune from envy and robbers. But when I indulge myself in the arms of the man that I love, in the moment of enjoyment my own form returns; for that is the nature of the charm I have made use of, to be suspended by the vigorous embraces of a lover. But very few have been the men that have obtained this favor; and those who could not retain the agreeable secret, have, by their speedy ruin, prevented my revenge; for that has been always the care of my *dæmon*, to preserve me from the blind and barbarous cruelty, the laws made by the ignorant inflict on our science. Enjoy, therefore, the pleasure of the night; for with the return of the sun I rise old and ugly, and you find no longer in your arms the beautiful *Biancha*, but the frightful *Invidiosa*.

I could not but express my wonder and pleasure, by assuring her, that I wished the double night of *Thebes*, when *Jupiter* and *Alcmena* begot the monster-queller, *Hercules*, that I might not be so speedily banished a paradise so ravishing.

CHAPTER XII.

The farther villany of friar Bernardo, in cuckolding his patron, which proved the death of the wife, her brother, and the friar. Fantasio's retreat discovered to the Cardinal. The pursuit comes to Invidiosa's house. She turns him into a fine Bologna lap-dog to preserve him. She is committed for his murder ; and he carried away in that shape.

THUS we passed several nights in the full luxury of pleasure, and the days in taking my instruction in this art from my mistress, in *love* and in *science*. The wonderful effects of her art, the several animals she had about her house, all formerly men or women, their fortunes, their vices, and characters ; as well as the amazing sights she gave me a view of, in the earth, the water, and the air, I shall not mix here with my own fortunes, having committed them to a history by themselves, worthy the knowledge of posterity.

I told her one day that I was very much surprised to find, that so barbarous an injury as

friar *Bernardo* had done her, met with no farther resentment than sorrow and tears. That certainly she must love him extremely, to forgive him so easily, a treachery so enormous. I must confess, replied she, had my love for him grown in proportion to his manhood, there had been few faults that I could not have forgiven him, especially such as I might flatter myself were the effect of an insurmountable passion for my beauty and person. But as I was more a sacrifice to my mother's commands than my own inclination, I never found him make a farther progress in my heart, than duty required. So on the discovery, I easily gave into the extremity of rage; and had my mother permitted, both he and his confederate should have done sufficient, but secret penance for the transgression. But hindered of that, as I have told you, and baffled by the false measures my mother pursued, I confess my revenge then prompted me to this study, which only could furnish me with the means of obtaining it. But providence prevented my crime in the villain's death, in a country far distant from hence, in this manner :

Having, after his being exposed in so public a manner, left *Rome*, he retired into *Perigord* in *France*, where, at a convent of his order, he fell into the acquaintance of a gentleman of that country, who was a mighty devotee to *St. Francis*. *Bernardo* had a cunning insinuating way, and

soon won the heart of the country 'squire to such a degree, that himself and his house was entirely at his command. Nay, he was so fond of him, that he would often oblige him to lie at his house, though within four miles of his convent. There was no secret of his life, or purpose he had, but he communicated it to the friar. This gentleman had a very handsome wife, on whom the amorous friar had cast a hawk's eye, as the destined prey of his lust. She had now lain in about three weeks and odd days, her husband being extremely fond, had prevailed with her to let him come to bed to her a certain night about twelve. The 'squire having some scruple of conscience about the matter, consults his confessor father *Bernardo*, who carefully made a full inquiry into the time, by many dubious and roundabout queries that led not directly to the matter. He told him, after a full hearing of the case, that there was no great crime to anticipate the leave of the church a few days, provided in amends he made some small offering for the prayers of his convent.

He would not enlarge the husband's scruples, nor entirely forbid the encounter, lest he should inform his wife that she should not expect him; but being in his chamber before they went to bed, the jolly friar pushes the glass and makes him pretty mellow; so not doubting but he would sleep much past the hour,

he put him to bed about half past eleven, and retiring to his chamber, undresses himself ready for the amorous encounter ; he steals into the lady's bed-chamber, and soon into the bed, nor was he long before he came master of his wishes in her arms. After an unusual course of desire, the friar retired without speaking a word but in whisper. Retreating to his chamber he soon got on his clothes and hastened to the door ; and by the authority he had in the house, he easily prevailed with the porter to open the gate and get him his horse. The husband awaking remembers his assignation with his wife, and immediately repairs to her chamber soon after the friar was withdrawn ; she taking him for the same, was desirous to know what was the cause of his return, when he had quite tired her with love already ? He was not a little surprised at the foul play that had been offered him ; and remembering the friar's questions, his toping with him so late, and that no man lay on that side the house but him and her brother, he went directly to the friar's apartment. He found him not there, and coming to the porter had from him a full confirmation of his doubts, and returns to his wife to let her know the certainty of her misfortune, with which she was so affected, that in her husband's absence in pursuit of the friar, she hanged herself, and in the struggles of death gave her

young babe such a kick in the stomach, that the child expired in such cries, that the nurse, who lay in a closet just by, runs into the room; but amazed and affrighted at the miserable object, she ran to her brother's chamber, who finding his sister and child in this condition, was told by the nurse, that none had been there but her master.

The brother searching for him in vain in the house, taking horse, rode out to pursue him in his imagined escape. He met him returning from chasing the friar, who had taken another course than to his convent, and no sooner came up to him, but calling him coward and villain, drew his sword upon him. Self defence prevailed with the husband to stand on his guard, and in the heat of the pushing he ran the brother through. On his inquiry of the cause of his brother's unprovoked rage, he found the unhappy catastrophe of his wife and child, and in excess of sorrow gave him a full account of what had passed, and the villany of the friar, and as well as he could, conveyed him to his house, where, before the family, he declared himself the occasion of his own death; but for the farther security, he had the king's pardon.

The morning coming on, and inquiry being made round the country, the friar's horse was found grazing with his saddle on in a large com-

mon, and himself a little after with his neck broke in a pit, not taking much care which way he fled, fearing the immediate proceeding of the gentleman he had injured. And thus his own villany and the judgment of providence revenged me upon him, without any guilt of mine.

This story being ended, we removed to pleasure of body or mind, which we wisely diversified with the wonders of her art, and the wisdom of her precepts. But, while thus in full solitude I enjoyed all the pleasures of cities and courts, by the ministration of the spirits of *Biancha*, fate, envious of my bliss, was playing me so scurvy a trick as to put a melancholy period to all my more than mortal delights.

The Cardinal's agents had information at *Fundi*, that I had been seen publicly at church at the wedding of *Baldinotti* and *Camilla*, and that in all probability I might yet be found in their house. On application to the heads of the family, it was owned that such a person was brought from the banditti's castle; but that, on the wedding-day I had left them, on pretence of earnest business, and was gone they supposed, to my relations. This generous excuse had certainly been sufficient to have secured my retreat, had not *Lazaretto* been of an amorous nature, and had an affair with a cunning

jilt of that city, who missing him for some days, about that very time, from their usual rendezvous, was every day uneasy with him to know the cause of that absence, and what intelligence he could give her about that guest of his master's, for whom the Cardinal promised so generous a reward.

In vain were all her efforts on *Lazaretto*, he was too honest to let his lechery get the better of his trust ; yet unable to resist the importunity of his mistress, in the fondness of his drink and love, he confessed that he had been at his lady's farms in the *Basilicate*, to gather in her rents. Though this was far from giving her any ground to guess at the truth: yet the solitude of the place, his sudden departure, and difficulty of telling her before, and his known credit with his master and lady, but chiefly her desire of the two hundred crowns, made her go with some assurance to the Cardinal's agent, and tell him that I was most certainly hid in the mountains about *Malfi*, and there at some tenant's of *Baldinotti* and *Camilla*. On the agent's examining how she came by this secret, she laid before him all the grounds we have mentioned of her conjecture. The agent, to her terrible disappointment, made light of the information, and sent her away little satisfied with her treachery. However he thought fit to give the Cardinal

an account of the matter, and in a little time received orders to despatch three or four messengers into those parts to make a diligent search after me.

Biancha and I were one happy night in the midst of our dalliance, when, on the sudden, she started from my arms, and bid me leave the bed with all speed; for her watchful *Dæmon* had told her that moment of the approach of some imminent danger to one or both. Then going with me, naked as we were, into the closet, she shewed me two pots of ointment; the power of the one was to change a man or woman into an eagle, the other, into a dog, and bid me chuse which shape I would assume until the danger was over. I being apprehensive that a bird was more subject to hazard than so domestic an animal, chose the latter. She then began to anoint me all over with her soft warm hand, when I found myself in a moment transformed into a fine and beautiful *Bologna* lap-dog.

The operation was scarce over, and *Biancha* returned to the figure of *Invidiosa*, when we heard the whole house beset, and endeavours to break open the door: locking me up in the closet, she went and let them in, and with a very officious readiness shewed them all round the house. But entering my chamber, they saw those very clothes lying, which the malice

of my enemies had so perfectly described, that they could not be mistaken : this redoubled their search ; but opening the closet, found no other animal in the house but *Biancha* and myself. They swore that she had either hid or murdered me, and that she should go with them to *Amalfi*, to give an account to the magistrate what she had done with me.

Biancha, with all her wisdom, was here at a loss ; to discover my concealment, was not only to betray me to the ruin she would prevent, but to have herself tried and burnt for a witch ; to let me go on in that brutal state I was in, without informing me how to dissolve the charm, was to lose me for ever, and to deprive me of all the benefits of humanity. She therefore desired, if they would oblige her to go to *Amalfi*, that they would suffer her to carry me with her, to be some comfort to her in her confinement. But they plainly told her, she must expect no favor from them ; that they doubted not but my clothes would be evidence enough of her guilt, when so powerful an adversary as the Cardinal appeared against her. That, therefore, in her favor they would carry that fine lap-dog for a present for his niece, whose word might be of service to her in her distress.

Biancha was satisfied, that without her own confession they could never convict her of the

murder, and had besides some confidence in her art, and the just defence she could make about the clothes ; so seeing there was no way of rescuing me from these men's hands, she desired, that they at least, would let her take her leave of the poor animal, that had so long been her only companion in that vast solitude. They yielded her this favor without going out of her sight, when taking me in her arms, and feigning to kiss, and make much of me, she whispered in my ear her amorous complaints, unable yet to know what course to take ; *that her only care was the loss of Fantasio, or, at least a long and tedious divorce from his arms. However, she bid me first be no ways concerned for her, since a very few days would set her at liberty ; and that I should be content with the lot that my fates had assigned me, secure against hardships in all my peregrinations from the general regard paid by ladies and people of quality to such delicate animals. That after I had wandered in this shape through most part of Europe, I should arrive in England ; and that in the capital city of that fortunate island, I should fall into the hands of a most learned physician, the Esculapius of the age, who skilful in all the distempers of the body and mind, could, and did administer cures to every disease : that, in the garden of this celebrated doctor, I should find the sovereign herb, called La Sana*

Mente, by eating of which I should recover my shape. That I should hear his name in every circle of the fair and the witty, as the Apollo of Britain in his double capacity of Poet and Physician. His name alone, being more than all the hyperboles of poetry or heightenings of rhetorick, was his best panegyrick ; for whoever heard the name of Signor Gartho, knew where to find a sure and speedy remedy against all the diseases of body or mind.

THE END OF THE SECOND BOOK.

THE
NEW METAMORPHOSIS;
OR,
The Pleasant Transformation.

THE THIRD BOOK.

CHAPTER I.

Their departure from Amalfi and arrival at a village called Ouzano. Of the gelding the parson of the parish. Their passage thence to the town of Cerino. The adventures of Philipino, Aretina, and Barbaro, and the unlucky intrigues of the fullers and bakers.

LEAVING *Biancha* confined with iron bars at *Amalfi*, two of the Cardinal's messengers went with me to *Liono*, leaving the rest to go back after their persecution of the supposed *Invidiosa*, by *Loconiano* and *Piesto* to sea, and so directly to *Ostia*, without landing at *Naples* or *Gaeta*. From *Liono* we entered the mountains on mules, the steepness of which and the

ill roads we met with, obliged us to make but a short day's journey, taking up our quarters at an inn in a pretty large village called *Ouzano*. We were no sooner entered the inn, but I was committed to the hostess to lock up in her chamber, lest I should be lost in that strange place, or stolen by the curiosity of some other, as I had been by them at *Monte Marso*.

The hostess was a buxom *bona roba*, and had for some time had an affair with the parson of the parish, till now by their want of caution or the jealousy of the husband, they were not a little suspected by the host of conniving his forehead. The hostess took me and carried me herself up to her own chamber, where, opening the door, I saw the vigorous young *Domine* ready to receive her; and shutting the apartment, they lost no time, but committed themselves immediately to the conscious bed, where the fury of their passion being over, the dame well pleased with his performance, mingling now and then a kiss, began in this manner: *Are you sure of your man? Can you trust him with the treasure of my life? Will he not do indeed what he is only to dissemble the better to deceive my husband, and make our conversation the more easy and undisturbed? Should my dull drudge suspect you meant only an amusement, I fear he would try the honesty of Martino, and I am afraid a sur-*

geon has not honesty enough to refuse a bribe to betray his trust. However it is, I wish you could have thought of some less dangerous way of removing my husband's jealousy. Fear not, (my dear charmer replied the priest) I have sufficiently secured Martino, by a bribe thy husband would scarce overbid did he know our intrigue, so much more does he value money than revenge. He is too good a christian, poor soul, to bear malice, at least where the execution of it will prove expensive.

Having ended this discourse and their amorous dalliance, she dismissed the parson by a secret communication between the house and the stables, and returns to her guests, who by this time were as ready for supper as supper was for them. They hoped too good a reward for me, not to take care of feeding me in the best manner ; so sending for me down, they placed me on the table where I fed only on what I liked best, refusing every thing but the choicest bits of each dish. Before we had supped, the parson I had seen so familiar with my landlady, comes in with several others, among whom was a surgeon, called *Martino*. The host and his wife, and some more of the family, and all the guests being present, the parson began this formal harangue: *You, my loving neighbours, and you my kinsfolk, that are present, shall be witness of my doings. It is said, that if thy eye be*

a scandal pluck it out; *and* that those are happy, who make themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven. *Now it has been my misfortune to incur the suspicion of my good gossip here, our host, in relation to his virtuous consort my penitent; being, therefore, resolved to remove all cause of uneasiness, quarrel, or ill will, by taking away the ground and cause of suspicion, so that hereafter my good penitent and I may converse with all the freedom of two of the same sex, I have already made my will, and disposed of my temporal and spiritual affairs, and that, as a good christain and an honest man should, do heartily forgive all my enemies: particularly I declare, that it was not only by my consent, but by my desire, that my honest friend Martino, the surgeon, undertook this operation upon me; and that, therefore, if any thing happen amiss, or otherwise than the skill of so great an artist promised, he has my hearty pardon before all the company.*

The company were some surprised and others concerned at what the priest said, while the strangers and travellers could not well tell what he designed by his speech; till now the parson being disrobed and bound fast hand and foot, the surgeon takes out his tools and soon goes to work. The priest was not fond of parting with his witnesses of manhood, but had made a secret bargain with the surgeon only

to make a flourish, and so pretend that he had perfectly gelded him ; but the husband, not without cause, suspecting his familiarity with his wife, as secretly gives the surgeon double the money to go through stitch with his work, and to make the parson an eunuch indeed, by that means to punish him for what injury he had done him, and prevent the like for the future.

The parson lying now at his mercy, whose money he had already received, his desire of that of the host's prevailed with him, at one slice to shave the parson so close, that spoiled his rutting as long as he lived, adding, that he did not use to make a jest of his operations. The parson swooned away, the disconsolate dame did the like ; the husband and company were pleased at the execution, and the man of god, the blood being staunched, carried home to his own house, where what became of him I know not ; for with the first appearance of day we set out from the inn, wishing our host always such revenge on the invaders of his bed.

Having now passed the mountains we arrived at *Cerino*, a town of much less consideration than formerly, which the frequent ruins demonstrate. Instead of an inn we went here to the house of the most topping baker in the place, who was a relation of one of my guard, and seemed a civil, good-humoured,

honest fellow enough, deserving a better fate than such a devil of a wife as he had. For such a tongue and such a tail, both at bed and at board, was enough to draw compassion from any dog in *christendom*, that knew but half so much as I did of the sex. For there was not one vice in nature disagreeable and shocking, from which she was free, her mind being the drain or common-sewer of all wickedness, where the several channels emptied themselves of their offensive filth and nastiness. She was mischievous, cruel, drunken, obstinate, stubborn, froward, impertinent, and saucy, in base rapine, avaricious; in shameful expenses, profuse; a foe to fidelity, and an enemy to modesty, despising and trampling under foot all the duties of religion, she would still wear the vizard of godliness, but the mask so ill fitted the proportion of her vices that the hypocrite always was seen in the false zealot; yet a long while deceiving the world and her own wretched husband, in spite of her daily morning wets and continual adultery.

The Cardinal's men had occasion to make some little excursive journeys, partly on their master's business, and partly to see some relations they had in those parts, leaving me to the care and protection of this pious good wife of the baker of *Cerino*. My beauty and

figure that would charm a care from people of any soul, had no effect upon her ; a musty bit and a knock being all I could get in a day. A usage so uncivil and barbarous I resented, resolving some way or other to be sufficiently revenged on her for my treatment. This made me more curious in observing her actions, nor was she over cautious of concealing her amours from the view of a creature that could not discover her secret ; so that I soon perceived, in her husband's absence, a young fellow resort to her chamber and possess even her person. Besides whom there was an old, fat, greasy bawd, the *go-between* of these worthy lovers, who was scarce ever from her, and with whom she frequently consulted, in the midst of full glasses of good wine and plentiful breakfasts, of which I could get no share, how with the most address and subtle ways she might abuse her credulous good-natured husband. One day among the rest, in their secret conference, I heard the old bawd deliver herself in this manner, though in a low tone, to avoid being overheard by any of the family.

‘ As for your present gallant, my good
‘ dame, (said the old bawd) you may do with
‘ him what you please, having without my ad-
‘ vice admitted him to your arms, though slug-
‘ gish and fearful to a degree insupportable.

‘ Who suffers his fear and terrible apprehension of the horned beast your husband, to disappoint violent desires and expectations, with a more than husband-like coldness and impotence. Courage is as necessary in love as war, for he that is afraid of his enemy in either will never meet with honor but shameful disgrace. Ah ! my good dame did you know but *Philipino*, what another man is he ! How much more worthy of embraces ! So enchanting, handsome, young, in the very bloom, liberal, strong, constant and active against all the diligent but inefficacious cares of the jealous husband. He only is worthy the stolen favors of every wife, and he is worthy of a crown of gold, if it were only for the trick he lately put upon an old, jealous, troublesome coxcomb, with admirable presence of mind and address. Hear but the adventure, and then you will be able to make the comparison between the different qualities of gallants.

‘ You know Signor *Barbaro*, an alderman of this town, whom the mob, for the sourness and severity of his temper, calls the *scorpion*. This man has a young charming wife, adorned with all the beauties of body and mind that can render her desirable to the young and the amorous. This treasure by the husband is kept under the strictest

‘ and most watchful guard imaginable against
‘ the access or attempts of all who may wish
‘ to possess it.’

‘ Certainly, (interrupted the baker’s wife)
‘ I know *Aretina*, my school-fellow very well,
‘ for it is of her and her husband you now
‘ discourse.’ ‘ You are already, therefore, ac-
‘ quainted with the whole story (replied the
‘ bawd) of her amour with *Philipino* ?’ ‘ Not
‘ with one word of it, (said the other) but I
‘ long to hear it and I beg you, my dear
‘ mother, to tell me every particular in its due
‘ order.’

The loquacious bawd took her word at the first rebound, and closed in with her desire in this manner :

‘ This *Barbaro* being obliged to go to *Na-*
‘ *ples* on extraordinary business, with which
‘ he could by no means dispense, fearful of, and
‘ desirous to preserve his own peace, and his
‘ wife’s honor and chastity, with the utmost
‘ caution and care, in his absence, he took these
‘ measures. He had a poor old slave, or ser-
‘ vant, called *Myrmillo*, whose fidelity he had
‘ often and long experienced. To this *argus*
‘ he secretly commits the custody of his mistress
‘ entirely, threatening him with imprisonment,
‘ violent death, or famine, if he suffered any
‘ male creature so much as to touch her with
‘ the tip of his finger, in his absence, assuring

‘ *Myrmillo* of his rigid performance of his
‘ threats with a thousand horrid imprecations
‘ and curses. So leaving him with fear and
‘ dread enough to make him a cautious and
‘ watchful guard on his wife, he with abundance
‘ of security sets out on his journey.

‘ The anxious *Myrmillo* having ever his
‘ master’s threats before his eyes, never suffers
‘ his charge to stir out of doors ; nor is he ever
‘ absent out of her chamber when at work,
‘ watching her almost to every necessary occasion
‘ with a diligence unwearied.

‘ But the beauty of *Aretina* was too considerable for fame to be silent of it, or for the
‘ inquisitive *Philipino* not to hear something of
‘ charms so extraordinary ; but that which gave
‘ him the greatest spur to the attempt, was the
‘ reputation of her own chastity, and the
‘ vigilance of her keeper, both obstacles worthy
‘ his industry to overcome. Pushed on with
‘ singular ambition, and thoroughly prepared
‘ against all events, he draws down all his forces,
‘ and employs all his stratagems, to storm or
‘ undermine the tenacious discipline of this
‘ house, being already sensible, that all human
‘ fidelity was frail, and that there were no difficulties so great, or fortifications so impregnable,
‘ but were pervious to gold, and that money
‘ would burst open gates made of adamantine
‘ rocks ; a lucky opportunity throwing *Myr-*

‘ *milto* all alone in his way, taking hold of the
‘ forelock of occasion, he addresses himself to
‘ him, plainly discovers his passion for his
‘ mistress, and begs his assistance in an amour,
‘ which could not be completed without him ;
‘ that he must perish without his speedy conveyance of him to the arms of *Arctina*. That
‘ he should consider the matter was very easy,
‘ and feasible, and carried no terrible difficulty
‘ that ought to frighten or deter him from the
‘ undertaking ; since he coming all alone,
‘ under the convenient cover of the shades of
‘ night, could, by his help, gently steal into
‘ the house, and after a little stay in his lady’s
‘ chamber, return out again the same way
‘ without observation. To this easy draught of
‘ the matter, pulling out a handful of gold, he
‘ added the wedge that soon split in pieces all
‘ the fidelity of this formidable guard, when he
‘ heard him assure him of twenty pieces of that
‘ gold for his mistress, and ten for himself, the
‘ moment he was admitted to happiness. But
‘ *Myrmillo* confounded between the dazzling
‘ charms of the gold, and the guilt of the proposal, stopping his ears and his eyes, he flew
‘ away from him, and locked himself up in his
‘ master’s house.

‘ But the locks and the bars could not exclude
‘ the tempting image of that glorious splendor
‘ of the gold he had seen in the hands of *Phi-*

‘ *lipino* ; the yellow light yet glared in his eyes,
‘ and made him with desire grasp the rich prey
‘ in his mind, while with a wonderful tempest
‘ of thought, and distraction of resolution, the
‘ miserable wretch is drawn, nay dragged into
‘ various and contrary opinions. On this side
‘ stood his trust, and fidelity to his master ; on
‘ that the gain and reward of his treachery ; on
‘ this his threatened punishment, on that his
‘ promised pleasure. But powerful gold, at
‘ last, drove the fear of distant torments and
‘ death out of the field, and left it to the present
‘ satisfaction. This contest was not of a moment,
‘ but extended its disquiet to the perpetual in-
‘ vasion of his nocturnal cares, and the destined
‘ hours of his natural repose ; the lust of gold,
‘ and pest of avarice having now taken full pos-
‘ session of his heart ; and though his master’s
‘ threats persuaded his stay at home, yet the
‘ syren voice of the bewitching gold called him
‘ abroad. Thus vanquished by this he goes to
‘ his mistress, and without hesitation delivers
‘ the message sent by him from *Philipino* ; the
‘ woman, following the genuine levity of her
‘ temper, surrendered immediately her boasted
‘ honor and chastity to the execrable metal.

‘ *Myrmillo*, overjoyed at the success of his
‘ negociation, on all the wings of desire to touch
‘ and possess the charming gold he had seen,
‘ flies to the transported *Philipino*, informing

‘ him of the accomplishment of his wishes, by
‘ his singular labor, industry, and address,
‘ impatiently asking the reward of his infidelity,
‘ and with a greedy hand receives the shining
‘ ore, which till then was scarce ever master of
‘ half the bulk of brass or copper.

‘ The night comes on, *Philipino*’s sufficiently
‘ disguised, and the lusty young lover conveyed
‘ by *Myrmillo* to his master’s house, and mis-
‘ tresses bed-chamber. But as pleasure seldom
‘ comes sincere to man, while the young lovers
‘ make their first oblations to *Venus*, in the
‘ midst of vigorous onsets, in the furious, but
‘ tender warfare of kisses and embraces, the
‘ jealous husband returns, as unexpected as
‘ unwelcome. He first raps gently at the door,
‘ then calls aloud, and bounces with impatience
‘ and suspicious rage, and full of resentment
‘ by the delay, vows unheard of punishments to
‘ *Myrmillo*. But he quite confounded with an
‘ evil so sudden, lost in the terrors of fear and
‘ apprehension, knew not what course to take,
‘ or what resolution to follow. At last, the only
‘ excuse he could make to his impatient master,
‘ was, that the darkness of the night, and the
‘ want of a candle, would not let him find out the
‘ key, which in discharge of his trust he had hid
‘ with that care, that he could not readily come
‘ at it.

‘ The noise had by this time alarmed *Phi-*

‘ *lipino*, who snatching up his clothes, and
‘ leaping out of bed, in the hurry ran out of
‘ the chamber without his shoes ; and coming
‘ near *Myrmillo*, he then opened the door, and
‘ let in his master full of oaths and execra-
‘ tions, who ran directly to his own chamber.
‘ The lover was dismissed, the door soon fast-
‘ ened, and *Myrmillo* retires to his bed. But
‘ as *Barbaro* the next morning was leaving
‘ his chamber, he spies these strange shoes
‘ standing under his bed, and taking them up,
‘ though he pretty well guessed by them what
‘ was done, said not a word to his wife, or any
‘ of his family of his intentions, he orders
‘ *Myrmillo* to be bound by his fellow servants,
‘ and dragged out into the street in order to
‘ carry him to prison, resolving by that or worse
‘ punishment to find out the adulterer.

‘ As he thus marched along the street full
‘ of tumultuary thoughts, and *Myrmillo* be-
‘ hind him laden with chains and guarded
‘ by his fellow servants, though not yet con-
‘ victed, yet charged to home by his conscience,
‘ wept most abundantly, and sent forth most
‘ pitiful complaints to move compassion in his
‘ master, and those that beheld him ; *Philipino*
‘ came by, and easily guessing the matter by the
‘ condition of *Myrmillo*, taking counsel from
‘ the present exigence of affairs, and the rea-
‘ diness of his wit, with his wonted constancy

‘ and handsome assurance, driving away the
‘ servants he falls on *Myrmillo*, loud in words,
‘ and seemingly very fierce in his blows,
‘ though he disguised his rage so well, that
‘ the beholders saw more than the captive
‘ felt—*You damned confounded rogue*, (cried
‘ *Philipino*) *worthy not only of these chains, but*
‘ *prisons and dungeons, nay the gibbet itself,*
‘ *who yesterday durst steal away my shoes, while*
‘ *I was bathing myself in the Bagno.*

‘ He being taken off, with much ado by
‘ the master and servants, full of desperate
‘ threats and counterfeited rage went his way.
‘ *Barbaro* by this imagining his suspicions
‘ ill grounded, and his servant still innocent,
‘ returns back to his house ; sets *Myrmillo* at
‘ liberty, with a lecture not very severe against
‘ the sin of his theft, giving him the shoes,
‘ with orders to return them immediately to
‘ the owner ; thus handsomely bantered into a
‘ security in his wife’s honor, and his servant’s
‘ fidelity.’

The old eternal tatler had scarce done her story, when the baker’s wife burst out into these pious ejaculations: *Thrice happy* (said she) *is that woman, who is blessed with a friend of that constancy and vigor of body and mind ! while I, wretched woman ! have met with a gallant, so timorous and cowardly, that the very noise of the bolting mill, and the*

sight of his own shadow strikes with a panic terror. Well, rest you satisfied, (resumed the old bawd) *at the hour appointed I will bring you this brisk, this witty, bold lover.* So having fixed the time that very evening, she left the longing wife to wait for the happy moment.

But to waste the tedious minutes, this pious chaste wife employs herself in preparing a noble collation, she racks off the rich wines, seasons the provoking soup with forced meats, and set herself out to make every part of his reception the more agreeable to so meritorious a gallant; waiting his adulterous approach as that of some saint or divinity. The husband was very opportunely to sup abroad with a neighbour and intimate friend of his, a fuller by trade, and one of the topping burghers of the town.

The sun was now gone to illuminate the other half of the globe, and left our hemisphere to the dominion of night: when the damnable bawd, most punctual to her time, returns with the forward adulterous boy. Scarce had the soft down yet shaded his face, yet capable of raising and satisfying the too criminal and too common passion in the men as well as the ladies. With open arms she receives him, and devouring kisses, and the strictest embraces, and all the soft welcomes that eager wishes and love could inspire.

The first hurry of love being over, they sit down to the table. But, as the malevolent plants ordained, he had scarce yet done with the soup and began the first dish, but the intruding unexpected husband comes home. The pious good wife having given him to ten thousand devils and wished his neck broke for his cruel interruption, throws an empty trough (in which they used to bolt their meal) over him, and removes the table into the closet. Having thus disposed of her gallant and feast, with her native cunning dissembling her guilt, she belies her fearful heart with a countenance unconcerned, and with all the calmness imaginable, asks her husband the cause of his sudden return, and of his leaving a supper prepared for him by his neighbour and intimate friend ?

When, sighing with a groan from his very heart, *Alas!* said he, *unable to bear the intolerable wickedness of a profligate woman, I fled away home. Good Heaven! what an age do we live in! What a woman have I seen! How faithful, how sober in appearance! And how she has most shamefully defiled herself with the most opprobrious disgrace? I swear to you by the blessed Virgin Mary, I can scarce credit my own eyes against her.*

The wife's curiosity being raised by these odd exclamations of the husband, she could not rest satisfied till he gave her a full account of the

adventure. Who, to avoid the stirring up of his wife's unquiet devil, began a relation which he little thought so near a parallel to his own case.

“ My friend the fuller's wife, having till
“ this moment maintained the incontestable repu-
“ tation of a woman of severe honesty, govern-
“ ing her family with modesty and discretion,
“ and a singular fame for chastity, has now at
“ last sacrificed all to the criminal embraces of
“ an adulterer. She was not content to enjoy
“ daily the impious thefts of an adulterous love
“ with her gallant, but knowing the appoint-
“ ment, was yet in his arms when we came
“ home to supper. Arriving something earlier
“ than she expected, the readiest way her sur-
“ prise could furnish her with, was to clap him
“ under a wicker flasket, she covered it with
“ some clothes wet with the warm *sulphur* and
“ strewed all about fine powder of the same as a
“ heap of white linen just working in the trade.
“ Having thus securely, as she thought, con-
“ cealed her gallant, we being come in, she
“ sat down with us to the table without any
“ concern. But the youth almost suffocated
“ with the smoke of the *sulphur*, was forced by
“ its nature to a frequent sneezing, the noise
“ coming from behind his wife, the good man,
“ the first, second and third time, cried : *God*
“ *bless her* ; but the sneezing still redoubling,

“ he suspected the matter, and pushing away
“ the flasket, he makes a discovery that perfectly confounded us all, a young man panting
“ for life and breathing almost his last breath.
“ The husband full of rage calls for his sword
“ to kill the poor wretch that lay just expiring
“ on the floor before us.

“ I had much ado to stop the execution of
“ his revenge by urging the common danger
“ from so wilful a murder, assuring him, that
“ in all probability the *sulphur* had done his
“ business to his hands without involving us in
“ the guilt of blood. Not vanquished by my
“ persuasions, but the present necessity, he
“ carries him out into the next alley there to
“ leave him to perish alone. In the meantime
“ I persuaded the guilty wife to withdraw a
“ little while to some friend or other till her
“ husband’s rage was appeased, which now in
“ its first excess, might produce some evil consequence too fatal to both. Thus sick of my
“ poor neighbour’s unlucky entertainment, I
“ immediately retired to my own house.”

The baker’s wife, with a zeal as shameless, as false and impudent, as soon as she had heard her husband’s relation, burst out into a volley of execrations against the unhappy wife of the fuller, *calling her perfidious and impudent ; a monstrous disgrace to the whole sex, who laying aside her modesty and chastity, trampling on the sacred*

league of the genial bed, had stained her husband's house with the filthy infamy of the brothel; and having lost the dignity of a wife, was miserably fallen into the scandal of prostitution, concluding her passionate harangue with this sentence, that such women ought to be burnt alive. Yet sensible of her own secret guilt, and admonished by her own sordid conscience, and fearing some like accident of discovery, to set her gallant free from his troublesome confinement, she every now and then was persuading her husband to go to bed in good time. But he, having lost his supper at his neighbour's was hungry, and ordered her to spread the table with something to eat. She speedily complies with his desires, that she might so at least be rid of him the sooner, yet much against her will, giving her husband what she had provided for her gallant.

The supper being set, I applied myself to the good man, not hoping a morsel from the abominable wife, whose last scene of impudence had raised my indignation to resolves of revenge, by discovering, if I could possibly do it, her favored gallant hid under the trough. The good-natured husband took care of me as the trust of his friend and relation, and fed me most plentifully, though not without many a kick from his ill-natured wife. My belly now full, I ran smelling about the trough to make him take

notice, but in vain, the wife averting his notice by some art or other; till at last I found one of his hands without the trough, and seizing it with my teeth, gave him such squeezes, that striving to get his hand under his shelter, he quite tumbled it over, and discovered the shame of the lewdest and most impudent of women.

The baker not at all moved with this manifestation of his infamy, taking up the youth with a serene action and calm countenance soothes him, all pale with fear and apprehension, in this manner:—*Fear not any danger from me, my son,* said he, I am no barbarian, nor of so rustic and uncourtly a temper, to injure so charming a gallant, for a little slip of youth, which you can easily atone; nor will I stifle thee, as my neighbour did his cuckold-maker, with the fume of the sulphur; nor even will I try, by the known civil law against adulterers, so beautiful and accomplished a youth. No, no, I will only divide joys with my wife, and one bed may be the pleasing and undisturbed scene of both our enjoyments; for I have always lived so amicably with her, that the same object that pleases her, must afford me like pleasure. Yet the law will allow, that the wife has not greater privilege and authority in the house than the husband, and as yet we are not on an equal footing.

Having in this *ironical* manner bantered the

young spark, he draws him after him, though unwilling into his chamber, and locking out his wife, there took what an *Italian* thinks a pleasing revenge on him for corrupting the marriage-bed.

I was not insensible, that if I stayed behind him, I should experience the resentment of the wife for the discovery I had made, I therefore made my way before him, but could not escape a little sample of her good will, for treading on my foot, as by chance, she almost squeezed my toes to pieces. The good man with a curse on her for her pains, takes me up in his arms, and conveys me in safety into his bed-chamber.

But when the returning sun had once again restored the pleasing light of the morning, calling up two of the lustiest men he had, he commanded one to hold him up fairly at his back, and the other to hold his legs to the best advantage, and with a *ferula* he laid on his posteriors in a plentiful manner, all the while speaking to him with a pleasant contempt.—How now my tender bardash, said he, do you so improvidently waste yourself on women, while yet you are so fit for the caresses of men? Do you already pursue the corruption of maids and wives? And though not yet ripe for the name of an adulterer, dost thou court the appellation with too forward an ambition? Having thus

abused him, and beat him sufficiently, he turned him out of doors without any farther damage or harm. This stout and vigorous adulterer, getting this unhopèd for delivery from death, covering up his buffettèd buttocks, took himself with his utmost speed to his heels.

The baker then sent his wife word to be gone out of his house, if she expected to come off with a punishment so mild. But she was of a temper not to be humbled by disgrace, or won by moderation ; but enraged by her infamy, made use of his lenity to endeavour a revenge. But her plot being discovered, to escape her husband's resentment she fled from the place.

CHAPTER II.

Fantasio is bought by a friar, confessor to a monastery of nuns in Sarno. An account of the amours of the friars and the nuns, and of several of their profane verses to their recluse mistresses, and of the lewd freedoms they took with them the first night he was there.

THE Cardinal's men being now come back, and having heard of the misfortune of their kinsman, and my hurt, they condoled with him a day or two, and then pursued their journey to *Carife*, a small but pleasantly situated town ;

whence passing through *Marzano* and *Solefra*, we arrived at the city of *Sarno*. At the entrance of the gate we met with a friar, who happened to be a confessor to a monastery of nuns in that city ; and casting his eye very wishfully on me, desired his brother, one of the two of my conductors, to give me to him for a present to a lady, a great devotee of their order, and a particular friend of his ; however, on finding him difficult to part with me, he proffered him two crowns in gold for me. Money, that does all things, soon diverted their minds from preserving me for *Donna Theresa* ; and so those who had no other right to me but force, for a price so considerable sold me to the friar.

The lady he designed me for, was only a beautiful young nun of the monastery to which he was confessor. For having long made his addresses to her, he thought he could not find a more agreeable present than a creature so very extraordinary in its kind.

Vespers being over, and the nuns according to custom being got to the grates, were pleasantly entertained every one with her friar. There he first produced me to the company, and raised the admiration and envy of all those who could not compass so pretty a piece of gallantry.

By the substance of this first conversation I found, that though locks, bars, and iron grates

may raise fine solemn imaginations in a stranger that sees them, yet they prove but very weak securities to their virtue, whom they inclose, when there are keys and free occasional access to the brawny young confessor. Here I perceived that the religious recluses did not always spend their time in devotion, bodily labor, or innocent diversion ; and that such arbitrary and unalterable resolutions were necessary causes of very dangerous consequences. For there certainly is that magic in nature, that is too hard for all those provisions, and precautions of their rules and institutions, and even legal penalties ; while in spite of all these I found them delivered up to the uncontrollable power of their natural inclinations. And indeed, when we consider not the frame of our *natures*, nor the dependance of our *beings* on the variety of objects that act upon us, but will contrary to the laws of our creation pretend to take heaven by violence, in a wrong notion of forced methods, and bind ourselves unalterably to such laws in the doing it, as shall contradict those inclinations that God has planted within us, and given, perhaps, that power and force to in some constitutions, that they cannot be controlled but by that legal and ordinary provision that he has made for them ; it is no wonder that we find ourselves *rashly foolish* in endeavouring to

be wiser than the Deity that made us, and instead of being extravagantly more divine and religious than our neighbours, prove at last to be but *ridiculously brutish*.

How just those reflections are, and how well grounded in their nature, the following account will sufficiently show, by the strange and wild excesses of luxury and lust, which my shape gave me an opportunity of observing between the friars and the nuns, and between the nuns themselves.

Father *Pietro* who had bought me of his brother, having shewed me as I said at the grate, ordered sister *Clara*, to whom he then made his amorous addresses, to send round a lay-sister to convey me to her.

What the discourse was between these jolly friars and nuns, whilst I was carrying round, I know not, but as soon as I was delivered to sister *Clara*, my new mistress, and she had given me such usual caresses as dogs of my merit meet with from the *fair* and the *foolish*,—
Well, father Pietro, let me see your verses, (said she) *let me see how far my eyes have inspired your muse, or whether you have any other muse than myself to fire your imagination. There are those exquisite perfections in the incomparable Hermione,* (replied the friar) *that it is impossible for Thyrsis to express the thousandth part of them, all language being too poor*

and scanty to convey the divine idea she raises in our ravished mind. I attempt not, therefore, to draw the divine Hermione's beauties, I only aim at expressing my own misfortune, in being a slave to the most obdurate, as the most charming of her sex. I therefore suppose my friend Daphnis complaining of a mercenary mistress, that he may obtain for money; whom I answer with the difference of his fate and mine. But the verses will explain themselves:

A DIALOGUE BETWEEN DAPHNIS AND THYRSIS.

DAPHNIS.

*Why did I faith and truth prefer,
And vainly think that wit would move?
'Tis only gold can win the fair,
Gold buys for every one her love.
Like holy cheats she barter heaven
For gold, not pious deeds and vows,
Minds not who gives but what is given,
To love she no kind look allows.
This contradiction to my bliss I find,
I love her heavenly form, but hate her sordid mind.*

THYRSIS.

I

*Happy Daphnis, since you know,
The price that will your fair one gain;
To yourself your ills you owe,
If you idly still complain;*

*If Chloe's vices the kind balm impart,
That cures the easy wounds her eyes make in your heart.*

II

*But there are no hopes for me
To assuage my raging smart,
To gain the bright Hermione
There is no price, there is no art ;
Honors and heaven are bought by gold and prayer.
But nature yields no bribe to win that heavenly fair.*

The verses (said Clara) are indeed very good, and worthy a nobler subject ; but they seem to me a little too profane for the author. Alas ! my dear Hermione, love has always a great latitude allowed him ; and a soul thoroughly possessed with that passion, as mine is, can think nothing profane that expresses the violence of his affection, or his mistresses charms,

Father Pietro, I think, (resumed father Antonio) is infinitely in the right ; for how can a mind wholly fixed, nay, wholly subsisting on the object of its desires, think it profanation to apply all the creation, all that man is capable of thinking good or great, to the beauties of Iris's or Lysander's love. For my part, I shall never find it in my roll of deadly sins, to pay that adoration to the living, and immortal and visible image of God in my Iris, which we think

it our duty to offer to the inanimate and senseless figures of divine beings. I believe what I have made on this subject may be entertaining to the company, and that the goddess of my vows, the sovereign of my heart, the incomparable Iris will accept it, as a pure offering of that passion her charms has inspired.

AN ODE

TO IRIS, BY LYSANDER.

I.

*With calm emotions I can view
Their color, feature, form, and dress,
And every lesser beauty's due,
With ease distinguish and express;
But when within my laboring soul,
Onward to birth the bright ideas roll,
Of all those beauties we behold in you;
My ravished thoughts their impotence confess!
For what of their united charms would be,
A monstrous, vast Hyperbole,
Will scarce the least faint image give of thee.*

II.

*Sooner might painters draw a sound,
Poets paint heaven, and priests their hell,
Reason faith's mysteries expound,
Prophets their wondrous visions tell,
Than I express one only grace,
Of all the honors of her heavenly face;*

*Like them, alas ! like them I should confound
 And not instruct my hearer's wrangling zeal :
 For all inspired fancy could say of thee,
 But a blind parable would be,
 Of thy divine unutterable mystery.*

III.

*I love you, Iris ; yes, by heaven I do !
 But with so pure a flame,
 As neither man nor angels ever knew,
 For which nor man nor angels have a name ;
 The human passion we by hope sustain,
 Possession keeps the angelic flame alive,
 Beauty and God their heaven would boast in vain,
 But for the joys they do their votaries give,
 While I in spite of all the pangs I feel,
 Praise my bright goddess in despair and hell.*

As profane as this seemed to my lame understanding, I found it met with no small applause from the company. The success of father *Pietro* and father *Antonio* prevailed with father *Sebastiano* to produce his poetical efforts to his beloved sister *Zelinda*, in the following manner :

*Frail lines, how dare you thus your fortune try ?
 Yet go faint sallies of my amorous mind,
 If you as good, as wise, Zelinda find,
 And from her eye one tender glance obtain,
 Your happy fortune will in me
 Kindle the flames of jealousy,*

*While I at distance breathe my sighs in vain;
Ah! rob me not of her heart or eye,
Tell her in her I only live, without her die!
Tell her I love, I languish, I despair,
And by the sovereign Godhead swear,
Cleon will be as constant as she's fair.*

I found that these good fathers were not content to employ all this profane stuff to win the hearts of the religious sisters, and to fire them with those criminal flames with which they burnt so violently themselves, but took care to endeavour to persuade them of the merit of their compliance, as with a duty authorized by the greatest fathers of the church, nay the *Apostles* and *Christ* himself; as will be plain from the following discourse and verses of friar *Dominico* :

I have found, my dearest Clelia, (said he) that you have often raised frivolous scruples against those freedoms I would have taken with you, and those agreeable sentiments of love I have endcavoured to instil into your cruel and obdurate heart, as if that which is the band and ligament of the whole universe could be a crime in us. The Maker of nature has fixed it as the preserving principle of the universe, without which all this harmony of beings would fall into confusion, and mankind perish in a day. No, no, by how much more peculiarly we are set apart and devoted to the praise

of this founder of love, by so much the more ready we should be to listen to the soft and gentle whispers of a passion to which we owe both our being and well-being. But that you may not think me partial to my own inclinations, hear what St. Augustin, St. Ambrose, and the other lights of religion have said on this head, and learn from them, my dear Clelia, to embrace that as a duty, which you have vainly hitherto avoided as a crime :

*St. Austin, preaching to a dame,
Thus praises love's celestial flame :
Love as the essence of the soul,
All other passions should controul ;
St. Bernard wrote a tract to prove
How meritorious 'tis to love ;
St. Ambrose too anathematizes
That he or she that love despises ;
And holy Lyra makes it out yet
Much plainer, none are saved without it ;
A famous school-man says, it purges
The mind, and home the matter urges ;
And he that is Seraphick named,
Swears, all who do not love are damned ;
That love's pure flames are heavenly fires,
And sacred all its warm desires ;
From whence on earth, says St. Gregory,
All lovers have their purgatory ;
Who, therefore, has so little wit,
As not to follow holy writ ?
Since we from many texts may draw,
By loving we fulfil the law.*

I perceived my mistress, sister *Clara*, not a little pleased with this last copy of verses, by which she found her secret inclinations so well justified by authority. And she immediately suffered father *Pietro* to kiss her hand through the grate, while a conscious red in a moment overspread her face. The good father perceived the progress he had made, and telling her that all above the girdle was due to the liberties of her friend, he therefore desired her to remove those clouds that hid her beautiful bosom from his eyes. She at first made some difficulty of the matter, but finding all the rest sufficiently engaged with their several servants, and murmuring love and all the loose expressions that uncontrolled lust could inspire, she withdrew the habit so far, that not only her fine round hard breasts were exposed to the friar's eager eyes, but even almost down to her navel. Father *Pietro* was not able to bear the enchanting sight with any patience, but commanding her hand through the grate, conveyed it into his bosom, then likewise made bare; what else they did was under cover, and hid from my eyes; but it was then agreed that they would be married the following night, and that sister *Clara* should be ready, dressed in a secular habit, as he would likewise be like a cavalier, and then they would unite

as others of the nuns had done, with the fathers of the order.

Bless me! thought I, what can all this mean? Sure never was heard of such a wedding as that of a friar and a nun. However, being ignorant of the affairs of the monastery I suspended my censure till I saw the event, not doubting but that it would be of a piece with what I had already seen pass between them. It was now grown near eleven o'clock at night, before these amorous religious could part with one another. But now the good fathers retiring, the nuns went to their several apartments full of those pious thoughts and desires of man with which their good guides had inspired them.

CHAPTER III.

The history of sister Isabella, and how she was debauched by a friar at thirteen, under his pretence of taking possession of her for the Virgin Mary; with her adventures with the Dutchess of Sora, her becoming a nun, the addresses and letter of father Giovanni, her hate for men and love for her own sex, to which she endeavours to persuade sister Clara. What passed between the two sisters that night.

SISTER *Clara* had not been long got into her cell, but somebody knocks at the door softly, and being admitted, proved sister *Isabella*, a nun betwixt thirty and forty, who was yet handsome enough to merit the addresses of the amorous friars. The door being shut, she clasped sister *Clara* about the waist, and hugging her with some earnestness, kissed her with such vigour and zeal that I concluded it was some young friar disguised in the habit of a nun for a better opportunity of enjoying her without interruption.

“ My dear *Clara*, (said she) I come to pass
“ this night with you to warn you of a folly you
“ seem already given up to in your affair with
“ the confessor. I grant you he is handsome,
“ and has a tongue that might well excuse a

“ woman’s frailty in yielding to his desires; but
“ believe me, who have experienced it, the joys
“ that a man can bestow are by no means equal
“ to the pains that a passion for him must ne-
“ cessarily produce. And of all men the love
“ of a friar is the most to be avoided, for he is
“ the most fickle of mankind. It is true, if a
“ nun must needs have an intrigue with that
“ vain animal, I think it is more prudent to
“ bestow the favor on a monk than a secular, be-
“ cause there is a tie on his secresy which his
“ own interest confirms. But since a woman
“ can have no appetite that a woman is not ca-
“ pable of satisfying, I know not why we should
“ run the hazard of pains that in all probabili-
“ ty must follow the enjoyment of a man.

“ Besides, the liberties too many of our sisters
“ have allowed the friars, may one day bring a
“ ruin on our monastery, not only by a waste
“ of the revenue of our house, which our pre-
“ sent abbess, in compliance with the luxury of
“ the friars, suffers without any thought of the
“ event, but also by the too frequent births
“ that have happened of children begot by those
“ ungodly fathers, which by some accident or
“ other, or by a visitation from the bishop, may
“ ruin our reputation. We are fixed in this
“ city, we cannot remove, and must abide by the
“ infamy, while the authors of our disgrace, on

“ any threatening evil, remove to some distant
“ convent of their order and are never heard of
“ more.

“ It is true human nature is not able to sup-
“ port all the desires and appetites it has with-
“ out allowing them somewhat proportionable
“ to their cause; but then there are ways of
“ doing all this without incurring so dangerous
“ a scandal, or bringing ourselves under a ty-
“ ranny of men who set no bounds to their will,
“ and who seem satisfied with nothing but our
“ ruin. Yes, charming *Clara*, if you let me
“ pass this night with you, I hope to convince
“ you that you have no need of father *Pietro* to
“ give you all the pleasure so much youth
“ requires. Our party is already grown pretty
“ strong, and if we can once get out this foolish
“ abbess, I hope we shall free our monastery
“ from so villanous a tuition as now it lies
“ under.

“ I am strangely surprised, (replied sister
“ *Clara*) at what you have said, my dear *Isa-*
“ *bella*; and am perfectly ignorant of what you
“ mean by joys and pleasures between the same
“ sex. But I fancy you have received some
“ strange injury from the men, that you are
“ grown so inveterate an enemy to the whole
“ kind. I freely confess, (returned *Isabella*)
“ the ground of my aversion was an incredible
“ abuse which I received from a friar in my

“ childhood I may call it, having not then seen
“ full thirteen. You will infinitely oblige me,
“ (replied sister *Clara*) to give me an account of
“ your life, which I fancy must yield something
“ extraordinary, since it has given you such
“ notions of things as to me seem unaccount-
“ able.

“ Though it grows pretty late and you may
“ begin to want repose, (resumed *Isabella*)
“ yet since your curiosity overcomes your incli-
“ nations to sleep, while you undress yourself I
“ will give you a summary account of my life.”

I was born at *Sora* in the *Abruzzo*, of parents not very eminent for fortune or quality, yet my father's employ was sufficient to give me a genteel education. I am of opinion that there is some impulse of nature, or influence of the stars, which pushes some more than others on the confines of *Venus*. I confess I did not know any thing what it was that men and women were joined for, yet, by that time I was turned of twelve I began to have a great inclination to marriage; that is, I had a mighty mind to have a husband: to which end I frequented the convent of the friars (where my mother and all our family always chose their confessors) to pray to the Virgin *Mary* to send me a good husband according to my desire. I had continued this prayer now almost a year, when finding no effects of all my orisons, I began to suspect I had

made a sinful demand, and full of this fear I applied myself to my confessor, a grave old religious friar in appearance, but in effect without either gravity or religion.

He finding my simplicity, told me he would pray to the blessed *Virgin* to know her will in that particular, and ordered me to come to confession again in a day or two, and he would give me her answer. I was overjoyed in my mind, I had got so good an advocate in my cause, and was punctual to a minute to know the result. When I came to him in the confessional, — *Cease (said he) my pretty little daughter, to ask a husband of the blessed Virgin Mary, who being herself a maid, will have you have no husband at all. Since you tell me (replied I) that it is the will of the blessed Virgin, I will give and dedicate my virginity to heaven.* The good father commended my pious resolution, and told me that the *Virgin* had ordered that I should dedicate it to her in some church. *I replied that since the Virgin had demanded it in his church, that seemed the fittest for the oblation. I approve of your devotion, my good daughter, (said he) and now, therefore, depart in peace and return in the morning; for this night I will spend in prayer to our Lady, that she may vouchsafe to ratify the dedication of thy virginity; and having washed your body all clean in the morning, and put on clean linen, return to me, for it*

is not lawful for anything unclean to be offered to the *Virgin* by her priests. Take care to be here in good time, and alone, for there are to be no witnesses of the consecration of those things of which the *Virgin* takes possession.

Returning in the morning full of devotion to the *Virgin*, he led me to his cell, where on an altar I saw a crucifix surrounded with abundance of wax candles, and above all a picture of our Lady. The door being fastened we both joined in prayer, and sang some hymns to the *Virgin*; when both rising up, my daughter (said he) you must now take off your upper garment, to consecrate it to our Lady, which having by his help performed with all the form of devotion and praying, and he singing hymns all the while, he then ordered me to pull off the next, and so on till I was now come to my shift. I was a little surprised in spite of my ignorance; but the formality of the ceremony, and the gravity of his aspect, and the mighty opinion of his holiness, lulled asleep all suspicion of foul play, and I really believed this was the peculiar order of the church, since performed in such solemnity before the crucifix and the picture of the blessed *Virgin*. Being now only covered with my shift, and blushing all over, and with my eyes quite shut with fear and devotion, he then tells me, that I must pull off my shift too, for the *Virgin* and the Saints being all without clothes them-

selves, would have nothing offered to them but what was quite naked.

But I could not with all his threats be prevailed with to do that office myself, but suffered him to take it away, and leave me quite naked to his view. When having said another prayer, and sung another hymn, he approaches me very close, and pressing my little breasts with his trembling fingers, these precious little balls (said he) are thus offered to my church, and her patroness the blessed Virgin *Mary*. Then stroking my chin with both his hands, this likewise is offered to my church and her patroness; then running over my cheeks (all blushing hot as fire) approaching my mouth, this (said he) my daughter, must be taken possession of only by mouth, when kissing me three times, and these ruddy lips are an offering to my church. Thence having passed from my bosom to my belly, and taken seizin of them, as offerings to his church, he ordered me first to kneel down before the altar, and say after him these words: *Oh! ever glorious Virgin, I here offer thee my virginity and my naked body, to be taken possession of by this thy minister and servant.* Then after a short hymn, he orders me to lie down at the foot of the altar, where my virginity must be offered to our Lady.

In obedience to his orders I laid me down all along on my face, in that humble posture to

offer myself up to the Virgin, when he kneeling down by me, and fitting himself for the cursed encounter, with an unheard of impiety making religion pimp to his lusts, gently running his hand all over my backward parts took those likewise into his church ; then with some struggle turning me on my back, he pressed my thighs, and my arms with the same formality of words, and seeming devotion.

O holy Virgin! (said he) *who hast with so much beauty adorned this thy votary, formed these tremulous thighs, this firm round belly, these small taper arms and fingers with so much angelic symmetry, proportion, and softness ; behold this thy little handmaid, and rejoice in the possession of such a servant.* Having sung this three times over, casting his eye to the scene of all his action and the distinction of the sex, and this, my daughter, I must seize with my hand, as the gate to that offering which you come to make to the *blessed Virgin*. And as the mouth was only to be taken possession of by the mouth, so must this be by what only can deliver the offering you have brought.

I struggled some time, and urged, that certainly he exceeded his commission ; but denouncing terrible anathema's, he told me it would be impiety to carry back from the Virgin the very thing I came to immolate to her, as I must needs do unless I left my maidenhead

with him. Vanquished by these reasons, and a sort of unknown pleasure, raised by his artful approaches, I suffered him at last between struggling and consent to take entire possession of my person. His first fury being over I was going to dress me, but ere I got my shift on he seized it, with this assurance, that as the mouth was taken possession of by three kisses, so must my virginity by as many embraces. The first fear being over, and thinking it my duty and the pleasure its reward, he easily made me do what he pleased, till great part of the day being now wasted in this new sort of sacrifice, dressing myself as well as I could, he dismissed me with an order of repeating the same exorcism the next day. In short, he cultivated his ground in such a manner, that I in a little time found myself with child. I informed him of my condition and asked his advice as well as assistance, he amused me with words ; until finding the secret must come out, he left *Sora*, and went to some convent of his order at the farther end of *Italy*.

My condition was now no longer to be concealed, my mother made the discovery, and flew into such a rage, that had not my father intervened I believe that day had been the last of my life ; but he loving me more tenderly than my mother, drew me away, and having fully examined the matter gave credit

to my account, and vowed a certain revenge on the treacherous and impious friar, if he could by any means find out the convent to which he was fled ; but for fear my mother should treat me too severely, he placed me with a friend in the country, not far from the *Villa* of the Dutchess of *Sora*, where I was brought to bed of a dead child, the fright my mother put me into having killed him in my womb.

I had after a hard travail some months of illness, insomuch that my life was despaired of ; for by the indiscretion of the people, the news of my father's unfortunate death was brought to my ears, while yet I labored under the power of a disorder not easily removed. He having by wonderful industry found out the friar, stabbed him to the heart, but being seized by the friars and prosecuted, was for the fact executed at *Padua*. The news broke my mother's heart, and had very near despatched me in the same manner. But youth and destiny preserved me to this happy hour of my friendship with the charming sister *Clara*, which is an abundant atonement for all my past misfortunes.

While I yet remained at this friend of my father's, and scarce yet perfectly recovered, the Dutchess of *Sora* happened to be at her *Villa*, and my friend having the honor of

some acquaintance with her, told her the miserable condition I was left in, a poor orphan about fourteen, with nothing but some portion of beauty and the charity of friends to depend on. The Dutchess ordered me to be brought to her, and liking my person more than I then suspected, was very inquisitive into my story; which when I had told her with all the sincerity of uncautious innocence, she pressed me in her arms, and—*No more, Isabella, (said she) shall you be exposed to the villany of men; you have met with a monster, a perfect representative of the wickedness and impiety of the whole sex; I will be thy father and thy mother, and will take that care of thee as shall secure thee from any future misfortunes.*

She suffered me not to go home that night, but sending for my things took me into her family. Her fondness was so extreme that she left the Duke's bed that I might be her bedfellow, and pass the whole night in her arms.

The Duke was a man of as ancient a family as any in the kingdom of *Naples*; but had indeed little else but his quality and estate to render him considerable; he was not an ideot, but so meanly furnished with brains that no man would court his conversation. The best

(at least most useful) quality he had, was his submission to his wife in whatever she commanded. The Dutchess was the daughter of the Duke of *Telesa*, a man of wonderful wit and an admirable poet, but not very religious, though he is said to have made a very penitent end. The Dutchess could not be said to be a beauty, nor yet in my opinion was she in the least disagreeable. She had her wit from her father, and perhaps some inclinations which her sex obliged her to conceal more than he had done. What affairs she might have had with the men I cannot particularise, her taste was quite altered when I was received in her family, as I soon found after she had got me into her bed and her arms.

That, my dear *Clara*, was the school in which I learned my contempt of mankind and a value of our sex, which, like some fortunate climates, possess all the joys it can expect from the other; and it must be mere wantonness and curiosity for us to rove after pleasures from that which still bring their pains, when nature and art supplies us with greater without any hazard.

I had not lived above three years and a half with the Dutchess, but she was pleased to quit this life, though not without making a tolerable provision for me, with this condition, that I

should go into some nunnery, there to spend the rest of my days free from the dangerous onsets and treachery of men.

This monastery of *Sarno* being then new built, a relation of mine being a nun of this community, I fully resolved to enter myself in the same, and here to give over all thoughts of the world and its vanities if I could. But I find that there is no putting off nature, and that there is nothing but the walls between a religious and secular life; nay, the disadvantage is of our side, while the desire is heightened by the forbiddance, and imagination that ever enlarges the object, draws the pleasures we know not and cannot well obtain, so much the more charming as they are distant and difficult.

It is this, my dear *Clara*, that fires your blood with expectation of strange rapture from the vigor of father *Pietro*. I question not but he has given you a sample of what you may hope for in the possession; for he is not one of those who is used to hide his talent in a napkin. But believe me, dear *Clara*, this experience would be vain and thy imagination betray thee to a mere disappointment.

You that have tried both (replied sister *Clara*) are indeed the best judge of both, but I that have tried neither must own a curiosity that none but father *Pietro* can satisfy.

The two sisters being now all undressed, *Isabella* pressing the breasts of sister *Clara*, and giving her a thousand rapturous kisses, cried with a languishing sigh: *Are these soft downy lips to be hurt by the rough lips of a friar? Must this soft bosom be rudely profaned by the hands of a man? And this tender body crushed in the robust arms of a male lover!* Then throwing off all her own clothes she stood naked to the sight, and was no unlovely figure, her eyes darted fire and her face glowed with blushes of conscious desires, while with a manly eagerness she drew off all those of sister *Clara*, and discovered a sight indeed so transporting as made me wish myself in a capacity of being the friar's rival.

Thus naked as they were they went at last to bed, after *Isabella* had sufficiently expressed her wonder at her beauties, and pressed her a thousand times in her arms, with joys and raptures which appeared most surprising. What they did in the bed I know not, but sister *Clara* declared in the morning, that if father *Pietro* could equal *Isabella* he must give delights almost equal to the most fertile imagination; assuring *Isabella*, that though she was resolved to try the good father, yet if he proved less successful she would be of her party.

As they were dressing, *Isabella* let fall a

letter, which sister *Clara* snatching up found a love-letter from father *Giovanni*. Ha! said sister *Clara*, my *Isabella* in spite of her aversion to the bearded sex, can keep a commerce with a friar at the same time that she would dissuade me from all thoughts of them.

It is true, answered *Isabella*, I have for some time had this correspondence with this good father; it is true that I have made him many advances to engage his heart, but I never allowed him any of those criminal liberties he aimed at. A *nun* should be a perfect coquette, she should engage as many lovers as she can, and get what presents she can from them, but if ever any one of them gain upon her heart or raise any desires, let her always have the prudence to satisfy them by any means but the lover's.

I have frequently had letters from him in absence, but I generally burn them as soon as I have given him an answer; this I have not yet replied to, else it had not now been a witness against me; but I will read it to you, since by some parts of the contents you will find that he has never been so happy as you design father *Pietro* shall be. Read it yourself, that you may not fancy yourself imposed on by my cunning.

Sister *Clara* took the letter, and read it out in the following manner :

To her whom my soul sovereignly honors, to the amiable though cruel *Mandana*.

It is but just, my fair Mandana, that you should be the sanctuary of those complaints of which you are the cause. Condemn me not, therefore, if I tell you I love you, if I tell you that you know it and yet continue cruel; if I tell you, that after you have raised me to hope you have still by some artifice or other thrown me down again to despair. Time that has taught me a great many things was never more favorable and yet cruel, than when it brought me to the knowledge of the divine Mandana; her conversation and power to oblige those persons she esteems, yet the coldness and severity she always expresses, is a pain which we can owe only to her. Pray let her know that if she had as many adorers as darts in her eyes or hairs on her head, my heart contains more fires for her than all that army could boast, and though their merit and fortune might exceed mine, yet my fidelity should as far excell theirs. So that I must ever aver this truth, that as the bright Mandana surpasses all the nymphs in beauty and wit, so shall Sesostriis surpass all

the swains in constancy and love. The reading your last, has raised more joy in my bosom than I have felt since I saw you, though I do not know whether I ought to except the moments of your conversation; in that you are so far from making advances, that you go from even those your letters have given hopes of. I find, however, that I am not yet where I would be, and that I have not that place in your heart which I desire, since you condemn the irregularity of some of my thoughts. I live not till I see you, and yet my former treatment makes me dread my return,

Adieu.

This letter (pursued *Isabella*) I design to answer by the first opportunity, for an impudent attempt he made on me by surprise deserves that I should punish him with hope and expectation as long as I can. The business was this; he was then confessor to our monastery, and coming to give the sacrament to one of the sick nuns, as soon as the office was done, he comes directly to my cell, where I was fast asleep, he opened the door and was got to my bed-side before I awaked; his kisses and busy hand first roused me, finding it straying about my bosom, I started from my bed, and gave him a thrust, that he tumbled on the

ground ; he soon got up, and would still have persisted in his insolent attempts, had I not assured him I would not only call out to the sisters, but complain to the provincial of his impious endeavours. He tried all means to appease me, and render me more compliable ; but finding that neither force nor entreaties could prevail for his ease, in a passion he flung from my room. This repulse has heightened his desires, and the less he did obtain has made him wish the more, and this is the method all prudent nuns take with their lovers, whether secular or religious.

CHAPTER VI.

Of the marriage of friar Pietro to sister Clara. The unlucky adventure of the consummation, which was repaired by the conveying the friar to her cell to pass the whole night. An account of what books the friars furnished the nuns with.

THE sisters being now dressed, they both went down to the choir. I was amazed that those who had spent the night in abominable wickedness, and whose whole minds seemed possessed with nothing but the wantonness of the brothel, could yet think of prayer, but that I considered that it was an easy matter for them

to banter the world with the form of godliness, who seemed to have lost all sense of the common rules of morality, and the known duties of religion. Being come into the choir, where one half of the nuns were scarce yet arrived, you might see not only a drowsy irreligion in all their faces, but in their eyes the remains of the debauches of the night.

After a supine and reckless performance of the morning office, and as negligent a mass officiated by their pious confessor, they retire to their refectory, and after their repast, sister *Clara* and several of the nuns were busied in preparations for the wedding in the evening. It seems that there was not one nun in the house who had not from her noviceship had some particular friar for her friend, with whom she was made to contract an intimate alliance, in those early years of obedience, learning to forget that modesty and chastity, which ought to be the singular qualities of their sex and their profession; and after a sufficient time allowed for imbibing and fixing the loose principles that were necessary, they were, with all the solemnity imaginable, made man and wife. The ceremony of these contracts was this, when any friar and nun were now come to this mutual agreement, they addressed themselves to the kindred and friends of those they desired. They gave presents as pledges of

their affection, and made demands and conditions, they assigned days to draw up the articles, to make the contract, and celebrate the marriage, in which there was nothing to be seen but mirth, gaiety, and gallantry between the friars and the nuns.

In the present solemnity father *Antonio* demanded sister *Clara* of the abbess, who personated her mother, father *Sebastiano* acted the notary that passed the contract, and having published the bans at the grate and below in the hall, father *Dominico* played the curate of the parish, said the same prayers, used the same ceremonies, and made the pair speak the same words in their turn as they used in the common marriages: there was a ring given, and put on the finger of the bride, sister *Clara*, and sister *Brigetta* disguised in a friar's habit made them an exhortation on the duties of matrimony. After which he and she were sent alone to another grate to consummate the marriage together.

I was yet too dear to sister *Clara* not to have her take me with her, assuring herself that she was secure in her confidence, when whatever I heard or saw, I could not discover the dangerous secret. Being come into that hall or grate, the friar on the outside and sister *Clara* within, they sat down, and the good father began in this manner:

You have now, my dear *Clara*, altered your state, you are no longer in your own power, and what right you might have had in the direction of your own actions, that is now entirely devolved upon me. Your body is not your own, it is now at my command, and must be subservient to my will; which, if you know yourself, you must conclude, that my will and desire is not only to see, but to feel, and enjoy every part of that beautiful person; this secular dress (for according to custom he was dressed like a cavalier, and she like a lady of the world with her bosom all bare, and her face full of patches, and her hair adorned with ribbons) gives me a tempting sample of that delicious flesh and blood that is now by right my own; draw near, therefore, to this grate, and I will open this little door (which there was in it to take any thing in and out at) that I may kiss those charming lips, and press those sweet soft rising breasts with my happy and transported fingers. With that he opened the little door in the grate and she rose up and approached it, their kisses were mutual and ardent, and proved so far from satisfying their desires, that they only served to heighten them.—*Oh! my ravishing Clara, it was with such a wife of snow indeed that our founder, St. Francis, tamed those unruly affections that disturbed his contemplation; and without the full possession of this wife of snow, I can*

never rest or be quiet. Before the tie of marriage all above the girdle was my due, but now all that is below is equally my right, hide, therefore, no longer beauties I long to see and seize for my own.

The eager *friar* incapable of delay, attempted to remove those veils himself, that robbed him of a sight he was so covetous of viewing, since sister *Clara*, though none of the most squeamish, stepping back denied him yet the satisfaction ; but raised many objections against the lawfulness of the fact, and the vow of virginity which she had already taken. To these he thus, composing himself as well as he could, replied :

‘ All vows are to be considered a little more
‘ nicely, than men generally do in their reflections on our breach of any one in particular.
‘ All vows are a sort of oaths or compacts,
‘ by which we oblige ourselves to do or to perform, such or such a thing. But there is one
‘ condition always absolutely necessary to them
‘ all, which is, that the thing vowed be in our
‘ power. For should any man vow to fly up into
‘ the air, or to stand twenty years together on a
‘ pillar, as it is said of St. *Simon Stelites*, or to
‘ live without victuals, or any the like extravagant impossibility for mere and unassisted
‘ man to perform, can any one in his wits suppose himself bound by such a vow, which, as it
‘ was ridiculous to make, so it would be the

‘ height of madness and presumption to attempt
‘ to perform. It is true, that by the assistance
‘ of the divine power a man is capable of all the
‘ particulars I have instanced ; but I know not
‘ what ground there is for any man to expect a
‘ series of miracles during his own life, only
‘ for the fantastical whim of forsaking the com-
‘ mon road of nature, and those inclinations
‘ and desires which the eternal former of man-
‘ kind has fixed in our frame and constitution.
‘ The mechanism of the body is so contrived,
‘ that as food is received into the stomach, it
‘ is there digested, and the nourishment sepa-
‘ rated by a natural chymistry, and each sent
‘ to its different part. There are peculiar ves-
‘ sels made for the reception of those animal
‘ spirits which nature designs for generation,
‘ and when those vessels are full they must have
‘ a discharge ; and if by any enthusiastic
‘ notions you forbid those means, which God
‘ and nature has ordained for that end, it either
‘ generates disorders, or filling the mind with
‘ perpetual desires of ease, destroys all its noble
‘ and sublime operations ; for while it is impri-
‘ soned in the flesh, it cannot be freed from a
‘ very great influence of the good or ill state of
‘ the body. Thus by hindering the course of
‘ nature, you make the humor overflow the
‘ whole, and by damming up a gentle stream, you
‘ make it rise into a torrent, which bears down

‘ all before it. You may as well pretend to eat
‘ and drink every day with plenty and pleasure,
‘ and yet make a vow against evacuation in the
‘ usual manner. Nature would soon let you see
‘ how vain a thing it is to attempt a contradic-
‘ tion to her indispensable laws, by forcing you
‘ to submit to the common course of things, or
‘ at once to extinguish that being, that was com-
‘ mitted to your charge, not only to preserve, but
‘ propagate.

‘ It is true, I will allow some one or two pe-
‘ culiar messengers of Heaven, have, by that
‘ divine power that sent them, been exempt
‘ from the common frailties and necessities of
‘ human life, yet it is a madness for those who
‘ have no such immediate claim to, or necessity
‘ for such dispensations, to presume on the same,
‘ because providence once, for the manifestation
‘ of his own power and glory at the word of
‘ *Joshua* stopped the whole course of nature, and
‘ made the universal motion stand still. Should
‘ our generals, therefore, presume on the same
‘ privilege, whenever their own or their princes’
‘ ambition engages them in a battle ?

‘ As what I defend is the just and necessary
‘ order of our mechanism, so is it also our duty,
‘ as men and women ; to avoid that con-
‘ junction which the wisdom of our maker
‘ designed in our original constitution, is pro-
‘ fanely and impiously to pretend to be wiser

‘ than supreme wisdom, and to correct that
‘ admirable order and law, which that from
‘ the beginning had established. God saw that
‘ it was not good for man to be alone ; that he
‘ had made those parts, those vessels, which in
‘ the course of digestion would make man very
‘ uneasy without the female softness to discharge
‘ with extacy, what had been hoarded with pleasure.

‘ The first law, therefore, that he gave, was
‘ that they should increase and multiply, and
‘ replenish the earth with his beautiful images ;
‘ this is the first and supreme law, which being
‘ enacted by omnipotence, cannot be dissolved
‘ but by the same power. Now, my beautiful
‘ *Clara*, if you can produce any visible dispensation
‘ from the universal law, your own voluntary
‘ law (that is your vow of chastity) may take
‘ place, else it is devoured by being directly
‘ contrary to the duty of mankind. You and
‘ I are now married, and that being an irreversible
‘ law of nature, puts an end to your rash
‘ and impious vow of chastity, which flies in the
‘ face of nature itself.

‘ It is true, that there has been a political institution
‘ made by cunning and designing men,
‘ to set on foot this celibacy, and deny the benefit
‘ of marriage to the clergy, but it was merely a
‘ human contrivance to bring a more immediate
‘ interest to the papal power, and engross the

‘ opinion and government of the people, by a
‘ pretence to an angelical and supernatural
‘ virtue in continence, both as to riches and
‘ venereal enjoyments ; yet believe me, my dear
‘ wife, this fatal hypocrisy has only served to
‘ multiply our desires and enjoyments, while
‘ they who refuse those that nature has allowed,
‘ fall shamefully into others which nature abhors;
‘ and while they refuse the relief of a different
‘ sex, they endeavour to create a difference in
‘ the same.

‘ These specious pretences have furnished
‘ such noble stipends, such large endowments,
‘ that at once supply so many monasteries with
‘ all the plenty of luxury, and swallow up the
‘ vow of poverty, without scandal or so much
‘ as notice ; nay, it is recommended from our
‘ pulpits as highly meritorious to make these
‘ donations, which render it as impossible for
‘ us to keep our vow of poverty, as the effects
‘ of it make it to observe that of chastity.

‘ But since these handsome provisions are
‘ made, and you, my dear *Clara*, and I, have had
‘ our lot thrown into this land flowing with
‘ milk and honey, it is none of our business
‘ to expose a delusion on which we subsist.
‘ But let us then like others in the same state
‘ enjoy with privacy and innocence those pleasures nature has ordained, and our constitutions require, while our past unadvised and

‘unnatural vows secure us the means and
‘opportunity of possessing them.

Sister *Clara* listened with attention and pleasure to the agreeable casuistry of the amorous father, and was pleased to be convinced, that her pleasure was her duty, and made no more reserves in anything he commanded ; she fixed a thousand kisses on his lips, admiring his knowledge and eloquence, which had brought so necessary a relief to her passion, which she owned beyond bound for her father and husband. From kisses they proceeded to nearer familiarities, which yet increased, not lessened their uneasiness, that nothing could atone but a perfect fruition. The place denied them a happiness which they mutually desired, but necessity the mother of invention soon offered the means ; there were two stools in the room where sister *Clara* was sitting, the friar advised her to set one on the other, and setting her hands and arms on them, by the help of the little door in the grate she might give some ease to his anguish. The poor nun, with a willing obedience performs his directions ; but as all human pleasures are mingled with pain, and all successes blended with misfortunes ; so when now the friar and the nun were as eager and happy as the place would permit, the stools not well fixed, gave way to her motion, until in the midst of the joy she fell with them to the floor.

The lover and his mistress were equally surprised, and I ran away for fear of being overborne with the ruin ; not doubting but my mistress had paid her life for her joy. But it proved otherwise to all our satisfaction, for she soon got up from the floor, and shaking her clothes about her, she only complained of her leg, which immediately consulting she found the skin a little razed, and some crimson drops of blood trickling down her alabaster skin.

The friar renewed his kisses of joy for her safety, and would not desist from renewing the attack by the same way, till she promised to admit him to her cell, where they might pass the night with more pleasure and safety. That it was an easy matter from his window to pass into the garden, where she would wait to conduct him up to her bed. So ending the assignation with warm eager kisses, they returned to the other grate, where the company expected them with impatience to their repast.

Here opened another scene of their debauch. The victuals were nice and plentiful, and their wine the most delicious of that country, each nun and friar had a small reed, through which they drank out of one another's glasses ; and when they were empty they threw them over their heads and broke them.

The table removed, they danced on each side the grate, and the nuns being dressed in theatrical habits, represented a play to the friars,

some in men's clothes, and some in women's. The mirth being at the height, one of the sisters by compact with her gallant, pretended to be ill, and so it was agreed the confessor with friars to assist him should come in to pray with the disordered; her friar going up to her cell left the rest below, who in the hall with the other nuns, toyed and kissed, and sometimes withdrew. The sick nun recovered by the virtue of the relic her friar had applied to her, returns to the company, while sister *Clara* and the confessor secretly retired, unable to delay their satisfaction till the company separated. So fastening the door of the cell, they where not long undressing for the encounter; and now being wholly divested of garments religious or otherwise, they appeared indeed a *Venus* and *Mars* just before the limping god had caught them in his chain, and exposed their happiness and his disgrace to the whole legion of envying gods and goddesses.

While the new married pair were fast in each other's arms, and some other nuns had taken the same advantage of withdrawing from *Bacchus* to *Venus*, I slipped under the door (where a hole was made for my going out and in on necessary occasions) and took my turn about the house to make my remarks; from the dormitories I went down into the hall, where two of the friars, something older and more bulky than the rest,

were engaged with the bottle, and one nun about a middle age, and the old abbess ; the glass went swiftly about, and friar *Otto* often solicited the nun, who being of sister *Isabella's* faction was obstinate to all his endeavours, though she had given him several advances.

He attacked her in prose and verse :

*Sylvia, why this mighty courting
To the joys you long to prove ?
Nature made you all for sporting,
Nature made you all for love.*

But both in vain.

Friar *Alberto*, a greater devotee of the vine than the petticoat, pulling *Otto* by the cowl, sung him this song :

SONG.

*Prithee sigh no more, fond swain,
If Chloe will be false, in vain
You give yourself a fruitless pain.
'Tis not loving, 'tis not dying
Holds the heart that would be flying.
Nor love, nor merit you will find
Can fix the fickle heart of changeeful womankind.
Then turn to the bottle, that flows with delights,
That gives life to our days and brisk joys to our nights;
Here no Chloe, no cares, no falsehood is found,
While wit, wine and mirth fly jovially round.*

The nun as averse as she was to love, was no

enemy to the bottle, and while she indulged her appetite of drinking, prepared herself to be unable to deny friar *Otto* the satisfaction he desired ; for being now quite vanquished by *Bacchus* she lay at the mercy of the good father, who gave her no quarter, till between love and wine he reeled with his companion about five in the morning to the confessor's apartment, and left the poor nun to the care of the abbess, whom the charity of the jovial father *Alberto*, had endeavoured to keep in countenance by addresses and efforts more agreeable than effectual.

The reader may be surprised at the abandoned condition of this monastery, which like the mansion of *Quartilla* in *Petronius Arbiter*, furnished nothing but various scenes of lewdness. But, to remove the wonder, I shall give you a short scheme of their education, the principles instilled into them by the friars, and the books that they were furnished with by the holy fathers for their instruction and diversion.

Their first endeavour with them, before their noviciate, was to inspire them with a spirit of wantonness and libertinism, and a desire from their first apprehension of pleasure of being courted and caressed, and applied to in all the addresses of love and gallantry ; they used, (instead of modesty and sanctity of conversation and pious instruction), all manner of unseemly privacies with them, to wear off the native mo-

desty of the sex, and so betimes to dispose their minds to be hereafter as complaisant to their wishes as they could desire. Thus from the beginning habituating the young virgins to such freedoms and familiarities, as made them in time believe them all innocent.

Being now become novices, the good fathers took care to keep alive those looser inclinations they had endeavoured to instil in their tenderer years ; wherefore they made it their business to divert the mistresses of the novices from informing them in the duties of a monastic life, lest lessons so contrary to their aim should make them lose that spirit of vanity and wantonness which they had inspired before their noviciate. They would make them little presents, and oblige them to wear them, and instead of instructing them against their professions, advise them as a duty to make an intimacy and friendship with some of the fathers. Telling them the advantage of these commerces was the keeping them from the taverns, and passing their own time very agreeably, which, without such an amusement, must prove the most tedious and melancholy. Nay, the fathers themselves would often quarrel about their pretensions to particulars. To gain time to insinuate themselves the more freely, they would, under pretence of their not being sufficiently prepared, make the governess send them the more frequently to their convent,

where all the lesson they taught them was love and gallantry.

If these freedoms were taken before the profession, when they were once professed, the good fathers had nothing to restrain the liberty of their conduct, since now they could not, to secure their modesty, retire from the nunnery.

To confirm them the more in their dissolute way, and divert them from rising to any virtue prejudicial to their pleasure from the reading of good books, they furnished them with all the romances, plays, and novels they could get ; nay, they had translations of *Aloisa, the School of Venus, the Catechism of Love, Arcine*, and the like. And sometimes particular characters for them to express their most lewd and abandoned thoughts, actions, parts, or desires.

As if these books had not yet been sufficient, they added these instructions : that all above the middle was wholly at the disposal of their particular friends, and that they were not to be refused either the sight or handling of them ; that this maxim ought to be well practised, that the mouth, the bosom and the hands must be always their particular friends. If any one scrupled these freedoms, they told them, that the kiss of peace in the primitive times of the church was given by all, that excess was the cause of its being forbidden ; that all the liberties they could take with one another, were at most, but

venial sins. To these instructions they daily added lascivious songs and discourses.

To these they added presents, as wet and dry sweetmeats, their pictures drawn *en cavalier*, rings, gloves, ribbons, watches, looking-glasses, seals engraved with cyphers and emblems, and *mottos* of love, explained with amorous letters and verses.

CHAPTER V.

An account of the possession of some nuns and their accusation of a secular priest for a magician, who was put to death for it by the Inquisition. Fantasio is given to the provincial of the friars, and so leaves this wicked crew of friars and nuns.

HAD the wanton frailties of these *friars* and *nuns* been their whole guilt, there might perhaps be some sort of plea for their wickedness, drawn from the common weakness of human nature, and that tendency to love and venereal enjoyments, which is in some measure implanted in all mankind; but what I am now to tell is a proof that, when once we quit the laws of religion and virtue, we easily fall into the greatest abominations.

There was a canon in this city who would

often invite the father confessor to a collation on purpose to make him drunk, that he might prevail with him, in his cups, to reveal the nuns confessions, as he frequently had done. One evening the canon had invited another of his friends, a secular priest, to pass the time with him and the friar, and there not only heard the confessions of the nuns revealed, but the several intrigues between the good fathers and them.

The priest was himself a jolly companion, better learned than most of the seculars of that nation, and free and easy in his conversation, though morally honest and of a very good and upright life. He opposed the father in all he said, and would needs make all his narrations the mere inventions of his vanity. The friar, disdaining to be counted a liar or a man so little acceptable to the ladies, as not to be really possessor of those advantages which he boasted, offered to make him confident of those amours, so far as to be an eye-witness of his amorous adventures; but that to accomplish it he must disguise himself in the habit of his order. The priest agreed to forfeit what was agreed on, if the friar made out what he pretended; so equipped with the accoutrements of the order, he was soon admitted to the freedom of conversation, and saw all he doubted confirmed beyond the least contra-

diction. The priest was a handsome young man, and of a very witty and genteel address; by which means he had not often been there but one of the nuns had fixed her eyes and affections upon him. Though he had no intention to pursue the amour, as the friars are wont, he proceeded so far as to give jealousy to the friar to whom she had been allotted. The priest was pleased with his uneasiness, and therefore made his addresses more frequent and close; till the good father, unable any longer to bear a prosperous rival, had some words with the confessor about this seeming friar, whom he had found out to be the parson of an adjoining parish. The confessor owned all the deceit, and told him the occasion, and consulted together how they should deliver themselves from a spy, who might some time or other prove the destruction of their pleasure by a discovery of their roguery. Matters being fully concerted among them, the priest was forbid the monastery and denied admittance whenever he came. Being often repulsed, he let them know that he would take care to inform the bishop of the holy conversation of the friars and the nuns.

This was no more than was expected by the confessor and his friend, who coming to sister *Clara's* cell one night informs her of

the whole matter, and proposed the following design as the only remedy for the impending destruction of themselves and their *nunnery*.

The secular priests, (said the confessor) you know are not very much esteemed in this city, and the authority they might have over the people is wholly devolved on the orders, by their preaching and hearing confessions, their indulgences and fraternities and the like. It is, therefore, no hard matter for us to ruin this priest, provided we begin first, and not by delays suffer him to deliver his information before they had taken off his evidence. They therefore proposed that sister *Clara* and two or three more nuns, the most apt, most strong, and most sure to their cause, should pretend to be possessed by the means of this priest, whom they were to name in the exorcisms as the conjuror or magician who had brought this evil upon them. This being soon agreed to, on a full representation of the danger that threatened them, the friars gave them a sort of catechism in *Latin*, with question and answer, by which they would always interrogate them in their public exorcisings of them. They then taught them several antic postures and gestures, which they should practise to amuse the people and confirm their possession.

The friars met with apt scholars, and in

a few days rehearsal found their force ready for public view. The sisters of *Isabella's* faction were excluded the secret, and therefore designed to be first imposed on; so in the midst of the night, when they were asleep, the sisters, who were to act their parts, made noises and walked about all in white like ghosts, till the other nuns were almost frightened out of their wits, and the noise was now spread about the town. The priest on hearing it, protested that he was not at all surprised at the story, or doubted in the least of the truth of the apparitions, since he wondered more, that the devil long since had not destroyed them in their wickedness.

It was now time to stop his mouth from farther explanations of his meaning; they therefore gave out, that three nuns were possessed, and were such a day to be exorcised by the confessor and two other friars in the face of the town, both laity and clergy. The chapel of the monastery was full to see the operation, and the sisters played their parts so exactly that few of the congregation doubted of their condition. The confessor after several exorcisms in public, in the midst of one, demands by what means they became so, the devil within them was supposed to answer, that it was by the means of such a man, naming the priest I have mentioned.

It was not long ere he heard of his accusation, and full of that boldness which should always accompany innocence, he applies to the bishop, gives an account of what he knew, and protesting his freedom from all guilt of that nature, prevailed with him to suffer him to exorcise them himself, since he could not but suppose this was a contrivance against his life to remove out of the way a witness of that villany, which their confessor's folly had betrayed them to.

The friars made some difficulty of allowing him the privilege of doing it in that monastery, which was not under the jurisdiction of the bishop, but the direction of their order and the visitation of their provincial, but seemed prevailed on the following day to allow him the permission.

In the meantime they prepared the nuns to receive him accordingly, with that extravagance and impatience, that it should be necessary for the friars to interpose to save him from their fury. The day being come, and the priest in his ornaments with the book in his hand, would have began the exorcism in the usual order ; but they with hideous cries and ghastly looks, fell upon him, till the pious confessor by the power of one *adjuro* reduced them to moderation ; when the priest went on in the usual order, and the nuns gave answers in *Latin*, till the priest forsaking their method, and

throwing in now and then a sentence of *Greek*, confounded the nuns so that they scarce knew what to do. But what they could not do by words they answered in actions, falling into strange convulsions, and an obstinate silence, or else into as strange a clamor and confusion, accusing him publicly as the cause of their possession, and of being a magician and one that conversed with the devil.

Neither the blunders that were so visible in this day's work, the innocence of the priest, nor struggles of his friends could avail him anything, but he was by order of the Inquisition taken up and committed to their prison ; and the belief of the possession of the nuns was now so fixed and established, that it was as dangerous to make any doubt of the matter as to deny an article of faith : for some of the poor priest's friends for offering to lessen the credit of the juggle to save their relation, were committed to the Inquisition.

All mouths being thus silenced they then began to think of his trial, and though they had often racked him to confess the accusation, they could never make him confess the least tittle of it ; but avowing his innocence, declared the cause of his suffering was only his knowledge of the dissolute lives of the nuns and the friars ; but this was but to aggravate his crime and prove him an *heretic* as well as magician, who would throw such an *odium*

on the pious recluses, and an order so eminent in the church of God. In short, after all the cruel course of the Inquisition, he was condemned and burnt by the arbitrary process of that tribunal, and insulted by the friars as he was at the stake, who threw whole pails of holy water in his face whenever he attempted to speak to the people.

This horrible murder gave me a mortal aversion to the nuns, and made me wish for a speedy enlargement from so filthy a *Sodom*. I resolved, though I fared very deliciously in that monastery, to make my escape by the first opportunity ; but was prevented by the arrival of the provincial, who on the noise of this affair, was come to look into the matter, and remove by a visitation those imputations the words of the dead priest had cast on the sisterhood.

He pretended much zeal, and carried in his face the lineaments of mortification and holiness ; but being removed from the public view, and in private with the sisters, he showed himself only so much the more abandoned, as he was exalted in years and in station.

Sister *Clara* was the nun who pleased his inclinations, and the good confessor had complaisance enough to allow him a share in his wife, which he solved to her with the necessity of obliging him, on whose authority their

whole pleasure depended. The provincial was so far from finding fault with the irregularities of the house, that he encouraged them all to allow to the fathers whatever they demanded ; that being set aside to the service of God, they could do nothing more acceptable, than the pleasing his peculiar and favorite ministers, the fathers of his order.

The provincial was advised with in the progress of this affair, as whether they should carry on the design against the canon and any other enemy of their order ? But he told them that he thought it more prudent to let it stop there ; enough had been done to terrify the canon from giving his tongue any liberty prejudicial to the affair : they should therefore be cautious of renewing this comedy, lest by a too frequent view the people should be undeceived, which must end in the ruin of that monastery and the disgrace of their order ; so having been some nights admitted to sister *Clara's* embraces, and passed a formal shew of a visitation, he prepared to return to *Rome* by the way of *Naples* ; but being pleased with me extremely, he easily obtained me of sister *Clara* as a testimony of her love ; and as a present to the niece of Cardinal *Pignatelli*, who was a peculiar patroness of this monastery, to whom the provincial promised to give me.

CHAPTER VI.

An account of a pleasing seat of Ludovico Astalli, a physician near Sessula. The history of his life. The wicked love of a mother-in-law for her husband's son. Her revenge on his obstinate virtue. The poison designed by her for him falls into the hands of her own child. The happy discovery of the son's innocence. Her punishment and death.

WE had not travelled a day's journey from Sarno, but the provincial being taken ill in the midst of a great plain, the litter in which he was carried made to the first gentleman's house that they could reach, which was not far from Sessula, and about five miles from the sea. It stood on a hill of an easy ascent, everywhere diversified with agreeable *vistas* of woods, vineyards, orange groves and the like. On the middle of the ascent there was a level plain of near half a mile square ; in the midst stood a neat built house, more excellent for its situation and convenience, than magnificence and ornament. The gardens were small but well kept, and replenished with things useful for food, as well as delightful to the eye. There fell from the adjacent higher part of the hill a pretty purling stream which fed the house with water, without cost or charge, and furnished the little fountains without much assistance from art.

In the furniture decency and use being the aim, there was not much sacrificed to ornament or luxury. This was the retreat of *Ludovico Astalli*, an eminent physician of *Rome* in his younger days. Here he lived unincumbered with the lazy vermin of the hall, a numerous train of servants, which was confined to so few, as should always be employed in the service of the house or garden. His lady was not handsome enough to give too much pain and jealousy, nor ugly enough to give disgust; she was, or seemed to be governed by the same inclinations, and moved by the same humors, the kind companion of his leisure hours. The love and indulgence of a fond husband, his allowance of unusual liberty in making her mistress of her own conduct, and the natural coldness and melancholy of her temper, could not well furnish any cause of complaint, or motive of inconstancy strong enough to make her seek that corruption from her vassals who only surrounded her. But either the solitude denied her the temptation or means, or the short time of our stay denied me the opportunity of discovering the contrary, or she was one of the very few good women I met with in my peregrination.

The day *Astalli* spent with equal pleasure and use, devoting the morning to prayer and study, and the afternoon to pastime and exercise. His pastimes were such as his wife could

partake in without injury to the modesty and decorum of her sex, and his exercise such as employed his ingenuity, as well as hand and body. In short, he was satisfied with what he had, and what he had not he never wished for. The love of the circumjacent country, his affability and acts of charity procured him ; and the love of his family, his indulgent care and mildness ; the love of his wife, his faith and mutual affection. His study was filled with few, but choice books ; his table was spread with not many dishes, but those good in their kind, in which nature was more consulted than art, hunger than luxury ; and his cellars stored not with many, but wholesome wines ; and the whole entertainment was as temperate as cordial.

In this blessed state we found the wise *Astalli*, not a little surprised to find a man of his faculty, and in the years when avarice or ambition is most strong, content with that mediocrity which has been so long praised, and so seldom enjoyed : for all his hopes and wishes were bounded within the compass of his own little but competent estate.

The provincial could not but express his wonder at his singular happiness ; and being now pretty well recovered of that indisposition, which had diverted him from the prosecution of his journey to his house, he was very inqui-

sitive into the reasons of *Astalli's* retreat from business, and seeming aversion to the world in general, which did not seem in him to proceed from a melancholy, or hypocondriac humor, but from more sedate and rational causes. *The public duties of my function*, (said the provincial) *force me from that pleasing retirement I might hope from my order ; and though I have not vanity and self-esteem enough to say, as Alexander the Great said to Diogenes, if I were not Bonacorsi, I would be Astalli ; yet I may say, that if I were not at the command of my superiors, I should wish to be the disciple of so wise a master ; and seek that happiness in retirement, which I never yet could find in company and business.*

Love and ambition (replied *Astalli*) confined me once to *Rome*, but far from ease and happiness. For there I was always in the chase, without ever coming up with the quarry ; or if ever I did, it was only to find it not worth the pursuit. I had an open confidence in friends, but they always deceived me ; I trusted to virtue, but that still kept me under ; and I found that a man who hopes to get preferment by honesty, acts as preposterously as he that thinks to win woman by sincerity. Honesty, indeed, finds a panegyric in every mouth, but empty words are all its tribute, and empty hands its support. He, therefore, that would

make a figure at court, must shake hands with so starving a companion, and dare some bold villany that merits a prison and the wheel. But I never thought dignity worth purchasing at the expense of my honor, or power worth the immortal infamy of a villanous action. Compassion for the distressed always opened my purse, but the product of their relief was generally ingratitude. My credulity in the vows and protestations of men served only to discover that the sacred powers of heaven were only valued by some to betray those who believed in them.

In the midst of these false measures, love, that had always fluttered about and hovered over my heart, now seized on my bosom; but exercising a merciful sway, I found the hardships of a long courtship removed by a mutual affection; we soon were married, and soon again separated by the cruelty of her death in child-bed of a fine boy, whose birth gave his mother her death, and whose unfortunate life was near giving the same to his father, though not by his fault, as you will find by the sequel.

My grief for her loss was real, but not immoderate, as knowing it fruitless and vain. Some years had passed in my widowhood, without any thoughts of venturing again on the hymeneal rites. But the devil of avarice josting my usual good fortune, I was introduced

to a lady by a friend, as mistress of more virtue than beauty, and fortune than quality. So that, betrayed by false hopes and false friendship, I embraced a cloud instead of my promised *Juno*, after marriage finding her as dissolute as ugly, and as poor as ignoble.

However, I thought it my best way to be content with my loss of the expected fortune, not yet finding that her virtue was as sophisticated as her face. Use, an easy temper, and her cunning flattery had in a little time worn out all disgust, and not only rendered her agreeable to me, but given her something too much the ascendant over my will.

My son by my first wife, had been long away from me at *Bononia*, applying himself to his studies, and I had now another hopeful young boy by this second adventure who was about twelve years of age. The eldest was called *Orlando* and the youngest *Giuseppe*. *Orlando* was a youth who had made a considerable progress in his learning, and was master of such a singular modesty and piety, that any man might be proud of a son so meritorious.

His step-mother either naturally loose, or else driven by the unavoidable necessity of fate to the most extreme of wickedness, cast her eyes and unlawful desires on her son-in-law *Orlando*. In the infancy of her passion, while yet she felt but the young and feeble

force of love in her breast, easily resisted its weaker influence in silence. But when it had gathered strength and robustness, filling her bosom with outrageous fire, it revelled in her heart without moderation, and she fell a willing victim to its rage, surrendering herself entirely to its conduct, and dissembling her disease, she cunningly belied the secret wounds of her mind in the apparent sickness of her body ; for the symptoms of love and disorders are so very much alike, that any one may well be deceived in their judgment : discolored paleness, faint and languid eyes, feeble joints, disquiet slumbers, the languishing and broken emission of the breath, more vehement by its slowness ; and all things would persuade you that her illness was a fever, but that her eyes too frequently flowed with tears. I had the best physicians to join with me in consultation what medicines were best to be prescribed, but ignorant of the cause, we might all very well miss the effect ; though I have since reflected, that there was no need of the medicinal art to discover the meaning of the immoderate pulse of her veins, the excess of her heat, the panting uncertainty of her breathing, and her tossing and tumbling from this side to that. These are symptoms so visible of an amorous desire, as only could be hid in our opinion of the patient.

Being thus agitated with the furious desire of the presence of an object she could not but wish for, she at last broke her obstinate silence, and ordered *Orlando* to be called to her apartment. The youth with a ready and pious obedience, makes haste to the sick mother of his brother and wife of his father, with his young brows ploughed with early furrows for the sickness he little thought himself the unhappy cause of, to execute whatever command she should impose.

Though tired already with a silence that had been so tedious and torturing, yet shocked at the horrible secret she was going to unfold, full of fears and doubts, how best to express herself without offence, she often rejected the words she thought most proper to save them both their blushes and confusion on so criminal a discovery. But her bashfulness and modesty now nodding and sinking before the battery of desire, she only thought of how she should begin.

The unfortunate youth concerned for her anguish and suspecting no evil, asked her with a pious tenderness and a submissive countenance, the cause of her sickness. This question with the damnable opportunity of being alone, made her break out into confidence; yet first weeping abundantly, and covering the small remains of her modesty with her face, in a

trembling voice, in this short manner addressed herself to him,—*Thou thyself* (said she) *art the whole cause and origin of this fatal disorder, that I groan under, and sole remedy of the evil thou hast inflicted, the only stay, health, and support of my life. For the piercing and consuming beams of those dear eyes of yours, admitted by mine too frail and uncautious, have transfused into my inmost soul a fire too violent to be supported. Have pity, therefore, on her who is perishing for your sake! nor let any mistaken piety to thy father give thee any disturbance; for first I love his face in thee, and thou by thy compliance wilt preserve him that wife on whose life and satisfaction his very being depends. You have now the lucky and full security of being with me alone, and a happy opportunity sufficiently capacious of the necessary evil. For that which is done without the consciousness of any witness, is as it were not done at all.*

The youth confounded with the abominable proposition, though he perfectly abhorred the guilt of compliance, yet thought not the violence of so criminal a passion fit to be exasperated with a positive denial, but rather to be soothed by a cautious delay, and a dubious promise of success on a more favorable occasion. He, therefore, with some earnestness, assures her satisfaction; and persuades her to be of good heart, and to

take all that necessary care of her health and recovery, that, as soon as my absence should furnish the opportunity, they might with security accomplish their mutual desires ; and having appeased her present rage with so pleasing an artifice, he withdrew from the noxious eyes of his step-mother.

But being satisfied in the terrible ruin that threatened his family from this unnatural lust of his step-mother, he consults his venerable tutor by letter, under all the obligations of an inviolable secrecy. The sum of all their debate in several letters was, that there could be no way more safe and effectual, than to fly the coming storm of cruel fortune by his speedy absence.

But my wife impatient of the least delay had so contrived the matter, as to send me on a sleeveless errand a pretty way from home, and where I should be sure to stay at least a night or two, to adjust the difficult accounts of a farm which I had in that country. I being thus dexterously removed before *Orlando* could get his affairs in such a posture as to remove himself without suspicion, bore down with the madness of her ripened hopes, she, with joy and eagerness, demands of my son the payment of that *love*, which he had promised without any design of ever making it good. But he confounded between the wickedness and the danger, by a subtle address under several pretences, for

awhile disappoints the execrable interview ; till having pushed matters so close, and finding a repulse, as well as by the variety and inconsistency of his answers, that she was never to expect the performance she languished for, by a strange and fickle change of her affections, her impious *love* was perverted into a hatred as extreme as unjust.

In her pursuit of which to an implacable and bloody revenge, she called to her advice a servant of the family of a principle so abandoned, that he would undertake, for a reward, any wickedness that could be proposed. The sum of their conference was to despatch the innocent youth by some private way, and poison was concluded to be the most safe. He is sent to procure the *bane*, and she takes care to dilute it with wine, that it might go down with the more ease and less suspicion. But while the guilty plotters were deliberating of a fit time to give him the dose, it happened that her own little son coming from school, and being very dry after the heat of the day, finds the poisoned wine and with a thirsty appetite swallows the liquid death prepared for his brother. He found himself immediately sick, and running to his mother falls down dead before her. Her screams soon alarmed the house, and the cause of his sudden fate was agreed to be poison, but the author of so barbarous a fact was yet in debate. But

this wicked cruel woman, a singular instance of a step-mother's malice, untouched with the visible judgment of her own son's death, nor the conscience of her own parricide, the misfortunes of her house, and the grief of her husband, or the moving sight of the dead corpse before her, from that very object drew the shortest way to her revenge.

She immediately despatched a messenger to me with the unwelcome news; and on my return, with a well dissembled rage of grief accuses *Orlando* with the murder of her son, which, in some sense indeed, might be true, since the child had devoured the potion prepared for the young man.

The more to heighten my indignation, she told me that the cause of his poisoning her son was to revenge on him her refusal of complying with his incestuous desire of possessing the wife of his own father; nor yet content with these abominable lies, she assured me, that since for fear of his threats, which he had urged with his naked sword, she had been forced to yield to his unlawful embraces.

Thus struck with the double fate of my children, I gave too much way to the unruly tempest of a most violent passion. Before my eyes I saw lie dead my youngest and found that my eldest must be sentenced to an ignominious end for parricide and incest. I confess, I was far-

ther provoked to the utmost detestation and hate of my son, by the false, though well acted lamentations, and inconsolable grief of a wife too near, and unreasonably dear to me at that time.

The funeral of one was scarce over, when I, then the most unhappy of fathers, wiping away the tears from my eyes at the interring of the child, entered the court of judicature to accuse the other of capital offences: where stopping the judges just then rising, (knowing nothing of the cruel frauds of my wife) clasping their knees, I pressed with my utmost earnestness and zeal the immediate ruin of the only remains of my family; accusing him as the impious poluter of his father's marriage bed, the murderer of his brother, and assassin of his mother-in-law. The person of a father, and the excess of my grief had such an effect on, and enraged so far not only the court, but the very people that heard it, that, without any regard to the formalities of a trial, and the manifest proof of accusers, and the tedious defence of the accused, they all cried out, *that he ought to be stoned, and that a public grievance ought to be revenged in as public a manner.*

The magistrates being afraid of a popular tumult, if not speedily prevented, urged the judges to assert the rights of their ancestors, in bringing the culprit to a fair trial, where the accusers and

accused should have an equal hearing ; and not to suffer so barbarian a wildness, or tyrannic impotence to condemn any one without being heard, that such an unheard of wickedness, such a profligate villany should be exposed in a calm judgment to the age for an example.

This wholesome advice being resolved on, and the judges being seated, the accuser was summoned, and the accused brought into the court with no little clamor. I shall not delay you with a tedious repetition of the arguments on both sides. Let it suffice, that the witnesses were examined and cross-examined, that nothing should be determined in a cause of this weight on conjecture, not positive evidence ; the principal was the villain I mentioned, who stood with that resolution to what he had deposed, *viz. : That Orlando being enraged at the refusal of his step-mother, had applied himself to him to procure him some poison to murder her son ; and that when he had got it, he saw Orlando give it the child with his own hand, secure, as he imagined, of his secresy, by the bribe he had assured him of.*

This villain's evidence being given in with all the face and circumstances of truth, the trial was over, and sentence just going to be pronounced, when a grave old gentleman and a physician rises up in the court, and being a man of eminent honor and authority, thus spoke to the

bench: *The pleasure I have in having reached those years which has given me the approbation of this bench, will not let me suffer you to commit a murder on this accused but innocent youth; nor permit you, who are sworn to do impartial justice, to be foully deceived by the infamous mouth of a false servant, whose testimony in law is always suspected; for my part I cannot so far trample on all religion, as to deceive my own conscience into a silence in so weighty a cause. Hear then from me the very matter of fact:—*

That villain, the evidence, agreed with me for some present poison for the price of one hundred crowns; assuring me (with horrible imprecations on himself if it were false) that it was for a person under insupportable torments in an incurable disorder; who had only a desire to put a speedy end to a torment he could not endure any longer or find any cure for. But I, imagining that the ill looking rogue had a mischievous design in hand which he varnished over with so silly a story, gave him the draught he desired; but having an eye to this trial, which has now happened, I would not immediately take the price that he offered; but telling him he should seal it up with his own ring, till a better opportunity in a day or two would permit me before him to examine the goodness of the money. Persuaded by these words he sealed up the bag, which, as soon as I perceived

him an evidence in this trial, I sent my servant home to fetch into the court. Here is the bag, let him see it and acknowledge his seal. For how can this young gentleman (without some better evidence than his) be thought guilty of murdering his brother with the poison this fellow bought and is much more likely to have used ?

The rogue on hearing this was struck with a panic fear, turning pale as death, a cold sweat running all down his body. His knees knocked one against the other, while scratching his head on all sides with his mouth half open, he stammered out a parcel of trifling absurd lies in so palpable a manner, that the whole audience began to suspect him as criminal. But recovering his native impudence, he began to deny all with a thorough assurance, and to turn the falsehood on the physician, till by the command of the bench his ring was taken off his finger and compared with the seal ; the comparison made the matter beyond any doubt, and having been put to the rack, he stood out the usual torments without acknowledging the crime.

I will not suffer this villain, (said the physician) to baffle your justice with his obstinacy ; for I will give you a present discovery of the matter. When I found he would have poison that would give present death, and not thinking

it the duty of any of my faculty to furnish the means of death to any, the art of medicine being found out for health not destruction ; yet fearing by a denial I should furnish him with the means of doing the intended mischief by some other or else by the sword, I gave him not poison as he supposed, but drowsy *mandragora* mixed with other soporiferous drugs ; whose nature it is to bring on a sleep on those who take them, very nearly imitating death. Nor is it a wonder that this rogue bears these torments, since he very well knows that death certainly attends the discovery of his guilt. But if the child took the potion I prepared with my own hands, he is not dead but sleeps ; whose temporary bands being by time or counter medicines removed, visible life will resume its place, but if he be really dead indeed, you must inquire some other cause of his death.

The venerable old gentleman having done speaking, there was a general approbation of what he had said. And abundance with me ran to the grave where the child was interred, nay the whole court and all the people thronged to see this desired discovery. I was the first that reached the monument, and taking my dear child out of the coffin and removing the muffer from his mouth and face, was transported to find him waking from his long dissembled death of sleep. Full of joy, which no tongue can express, I

brought him in his funeral habit, to the people, and so into the court; where the wickedness of the profligate servant (for fear of fresh torments) and his more profligate mistress being now made most evident, the truth came to light, and my wife was punished with perpetual banishment and the servant hanged up in chains.

By the suffrages of all, the hundred crowns were adjudged to the honest physician, as a reward for his sleepy potion, in which he had freely my vote, whose more than romantic fortune received an event worthy of the divine providence, who, in a little time, nay, less than a moment, as I may say, instead of becoming childless, saw myself father of two sons doubly redeemed from infamy and the grave.

Returning home the happy delivery of my children appeased that shame and sorrow which the infamy of my wife had otherwise fixed in my mind. The same providence that delivered *Orlando* from the rage of his step-mother soon punished her more effectually than the sentence of the court; for as she was taking her way towards *Venice* through the *Apenines*, she fell down a small precipice, which not being high enough to give her immediate death, breaking some of her limbs, she languished awhile, and died in a most remarkable and impious manner.

CHAPTER VII.

The continuation of the history of Astalli, with the tragical fate of Uberto and his three sons. The death of the young Duke of Rocca di Mandragone. Astalli's short invective against the exorbitant pride and insolence of the Neapolitan nobility.

HER private extravagance, on our separation and her death, soon discovered itself in the bills that from every side came in upon me, and which I should have found difficulty enough to have discharged, had not a relation (but just reconciled to me on the death of my wife) died, and left me a considerable fortune in money and estate.

Thinking this the white spot of my fate, and fearing the evils I had experienced, nor willing to trust myself, I made the chief part of my fortune over to my son *Orlando*; allowing a handsome provision for *Giuseppe*, if he lived, though he seemed in a pining condition, and promised a life but of a very short date, as it proved in some few months after my retirement. The trouble for which was the less, because it removed from my eyes the memory of a woman who had given me so great pain.

Having tried *friendships*, and found them

false; ambition and courts, and found them falser; *women*, but found them, to my own late and proper cost, *falsest* of all: having experienced, that virtue and plain dealing honesty served only to make one poor and ridiculous in *Rome*, unable to shake off two such uncourtly companions, I resolved to retire to this place, where I believed they would make a more tolerable shift, than in that intriguing and busy city. I, therefore, chose this place, as far enough from the hurry and designs of court, and near enough to its civility; where the inhabitants were so happily qualified not to be such strangers to good breeding, as to degenerate into *barbarism*, nor so polite as to forsake *honesty*. Thus I settled myself in this delightful place, whence I have an agreeable prospect of the *Mediterranean*, which as I sometimes walk on the beach, I fancy, when tossed and agitated with violent tempestuous winds, represents the confusion and noisy tumult of the city; and hug myself in my double security from the reality, and from the representation.

But I soon found so perfect a solitude too uneasy a state, and still wanting in something, which human nature required to its happiness. For being made a conversable animal, pleasure could not be perfect without a companion. To make my servants so would only raise them to impudence, and debase myself to a level almost

with brutes, missing that satisfaction in conversation, which commonly proceeds from a proportion, if not equality of understanding, and congruity of thought and apprehension, which generally differs in the several stations of life. These considerations brought me at last to this resolution, once more to venture in the lottery of matrimony, for a prize, that is not often met with, and which I thought the surest way of obtaining, to be a compliance with the dictates of nature and reason, more than the impulse of avarice or any other passion.

After a small inquiry in this country I found a lady qualified to my wish ; the daughter of a decayed gentleman, who lived a very private and retired life, not many miles from this place. Her father and mother had her ever under their eye, and bred her up with that care, that, as nature had given her a form agreeable, a sprightly wit and a genuine modesty, she should not want those additions which art could contribute, they therefore mingled her education in that manner, as to furnish her with so much skill in housewifery as to manage a family; and such a competence of learning as to render her person as conspicuous as any of her sex. To me I confess, she yet seems easy and generous in her temper, agreeable in her person, modest, prudent and pious in her conduct, witty and learned in her conversation ; accomplishments

enough to challenge the love and esteem of any man. Her love of solitude was equal to mine, and for that she valued me the more. She loved me, because she really believed I loved her; and she believed that, because I told her so. For being guilty of no dissimulation herself, she could not imagine that my heart and my tongue should not agree. Her father's authority was a medium, not cause of my happiness in her consent. In short, we were married, and though providence has not thought fit to bless us with children, yet that makes no breach in our tranquillity or love, which having had an easy spring and rise, still runs on in a smooth uninterrupted current of satisfaction, which nothing can disturb or ruffle while we live; neither of us desiring death or fearing it. If any care of the future engage our wishes, they are only, that *one fate might surprise us, and one grave receive us*. But, as that very wish is not so turbulent to disturb our present repose, so have we not any other in nature; possessing what we desire, and desiring nothing but what we already possess. The turns and vicissitudes of fortune, in the world, we think wiser to hear than be witnesses of; pleased at the firm sedateness of our own condition, being fixed in the axletree of the fickle goddess, we see around us, in security, the rapid motion of the wretched world.

We are better pleased to travel over the various climates of the earth with our eyes than our feet; in our studies than in deed. If any difficulty arise in our reading, we leave it to the decision of reason and probability, rather than to hazardous experiment. Our thoughts and observations we are content to impart to one another, without suffering our vanity to expose them to the censorious and ignorant critics of the age; pleased in every thing to lead a life wholly stolen, as I may say, from the commerce and knowledge of mankind. What good I can do, I willingly and without hire perform. *Physic*, that has been my study, I practise for the benefit of my neighbours, and preservation of my own health and that of my family, if temperance, the sovereign *elixir* of life should fail, or any accident or casual excess should invade them. My days are pleasant, my nights easy; when I wake I know no trouble; when I sleep my slumbers are undisturbed. And since variety completes the banquet of life, I neither confine myself to any particular study, exercise, or recreation, nor pervert a diversion into a business.

I was extremely pleased with *Astalli's* account of his past and his present condition and fortune; and thought how much more virtue accompanies the followers of nature,

than the sectaries of enthusiasm ; while the nunneries and convents were polluted with all the filth of a brothel, and these secular recluses (if I may call them so) so innocent, and so calmly pious and religious. It ought to have cast a blush over the provincial's face, while their voluntary retreat upbraided him with so little regard to the solemnity of a vow.

Astalli had scarcely ended his narration, but a messenger came to him to desire his speedy assistance to a poor farmer, wounded, as it was feared mortally, by his own hand, in a sudden distraction for a cruel misfortune that befel him, in the loss of his three sons, by the pride and cruelty of a *Neapolitan* grandee.

But it being now near bed time he saw the provincial to his apartment, and charitably made haste to the assistance of his neighbour. The morning being come, and the provincial got up, and his prayers soon over, he demanded of *Astalli* an account of the last night's adventure.

There is no greater difficulty flowing from an arbitrary government, (said *Astalli*) than the insolence of the nobility ; who slavishly surrendering their liberty to the sovereign, gain by that a power to domineer over the plebeians. My poor neighbour, to whom I was sent for, is a tragical proof of this truth.

Uberto is a good country farmer of the better sort, and one that had all the necessary plenty that uncorrupted and unmixed nature yields. He had three sons, hopeful boys, and extremely beloved by their father, *Benedetto* the eldest, *Giovanni* the second, and *Sylvio* the youngest. He had given them a liberal education, and nature modesty, and religion obedience, and piety to their father, and mutual love to one another. They went all three yesterday from home when *Uberto* was sitting at his hospitable table with some friends that came to dine with him. As the glass went freely but soberly about, one of his hens ran cackling up and down the room as if she was just going to lay an egg, on which he calls his boy to set the basket in the usual place, that she might not seek a nest, who had been so fruitful and beneficial a servant. But the hen disdaining her usual bed coming to her masters's seat, at his feet on the floor was delivered of a most portentous and wonderful birth, bringing forth, not an egg, but a chicken, with all things complete, feathers, claws, wings, eyes, beak, and the like, which immediately ran after her mother chirping about the house.

A prodigy so amazing threw him and his family into a strange consternation ; in the midst of which confusion and despondence, came in out of breath, with horror and fear in his

face, an underservant of his, and gives him this melancholy account of the ruin of all the hopes of his family, in the death of his three sons. These young men (for so their years may privilege them to be called) had a long and intimate familiarity and friendship with a poor neighbouring countryman, who lived in a small cottage of his own, and manured his own little patrimony with his own hands. It was the misfortune of this poor man to have his field join to and bound on a large estate of a powerful neighbour, young rich, haughty and insolently abusing the authority of his dignity, and the reverence of his ancient family; head of the factions and parties, and so easily doing what he pleased in the city and court, I mean the young Duke of *Rocca di Mandragone*.

Like *Ahab*, this young Duke had seen with an avaricious eye, the little vineyard of this poor *Naboth*, and was resolved to have it from him. In order to accomplish it he murdered or drove away his cattle, and destroyed the fruits of his husbandry ere ripe for the harvest. But not satisfied with this, as long as the unfortunate peasant enjoyed but the bare ground, he was restless, and therefore pretending a dispute of the bounds, he challenged all the poor man's estate to himself. The unhappy oppressed wretch to endeavour to do himself a

little justice, without any affront to so powerful an adversary, had yesterday summoned a great many neighbours together, who knew time out of mind the limits of each, to settle fairly and without fraud the abutments on each side. In this company were the three brothers, to give what help and assistance they could to their injured friend. But *Mandragone*, hearing of their design, comes out attended with servants and dogs of all sorts to awe and disturb the survey, puffed up with the pride of wealth and birth beyond all bounds of moderation or reason ; untouched with so many witnesses of his inhuman violence, he gave a loose to the haughty cruelty of his temper. The people addressed themselves to him in behalf of the poor man with all the submission and deference imaginable, and with words adapted to sooth and bend the stubborn and ferociousness of his nature, which he answered with rage and contempt, telling them, *that he valued not a rush the opinion of such a company of scoundrel mob as they were, but assured them that his servants should immediately thrust the poor man out of his cottage by head and shoulders.* On which the eldest of the three brothers, *Benedetto*, with a little more briskness and a commendable liberty, thus answered the Duke : — *My Lord, (said he) it is unworthy your quality*

to act in so tyranical a manner, or let your name be brought into a court of judicature on so unjust a complaint ; especially since the poor have a right to vindicate themselves and their possessions by the guardianship of the law, which must be their defence at last against the unchristian insolence and oppression of the rich. These words, though never so reasonable, were as oil to the flame, adding fresh fuel to the uncontrollable temper of *Mandragone*, raising his proud choler to the height of distraction ; for swearing he would hang them all upon the trees, with their laws at their backs, he commanded his huntsmen and followers to slip all the dogs (of the fiercest bloody nature, which used to fall on men, and tear the passive villagers) and set them on the people. The dogs thus at liberty, and hallooed on by their keepers with open mouth, attack the terrified multitude, and bite, rend, and tear them in a miserable manner. To fly was to no purpose, and so far from taming or appeasing their rage, that they pursued them the closer, and raged with the greater fierceness.

Sylvio, the youngest of the three brothers, about fifteen years of age, being knocked down by a stone, falls a nefarious banquet to the dogs, for having seized the fallen youth they immediately began to tear him in pieces. The

brothers hearing his mournful cry, run both to his rescue, covering his body as well as they could from the stones that were thrown by *Mandragone's* servants, and with their left hands endeavoured in vain to beat off the dogs. But all they could do could not drive them from their prey; so the unfortunate youth expiring on the spot, with his last words begged them to revenge his untimely cruel death on the impious cause, the inhuman young Duke.

The surviving two brothers seeing their beloved *Sylvio* become the food of dogs, not so much out of despair as contempt of safety, made up to the Duke, attacking him with all the weapons they had, a shower of stones, with minds as full of rage and revenge as courage and valor, receiving new force from their injury. *Mandragone*, now cruel by habit, inured to blood and such barbarous deeds, darts his lance directly in the bosom of *Giovanni*, with such vigor that most of it passing through the body of the slain fixed itself in the earth and suspended the dead youth in the air, who though dead could not fall down to the ground.

Then a tall lusty young fellow, one of the Duke's under domestics, coming to the help of the murderer, threw a stone at the surviving

brother which seemed to break his right hand all to pieces, but in reality only passed between the tips of his fingers, and fell to the ground without any execution. However, the politic *Benedetto* made use of the appearance to secure his revenge; for pretending himself thus totally disabled, he comes up to *Mandragone*, and speaks to him in this manner :

Enjoy the destruction of our whole family and glut your insatiable cruelty with the innocent blood of three brothers at once. We lived together always in perfect friendship and love ; all our desires, pleasures, and pains being the same, let, therefore, my fate from thy hands exalt the extremity of cruelty into mercy, while it unites me to them in my death, whose life without them must prove most miserable. Go on, redoubted conqueror, triumph by the help of weapons and your hundred wild beasts over a harmless, defenceless, unarmed company, that expected no such treatment. Since fate, by a malevolent influence, has thus deprived me of this right hand, that should with the loss of thy life have revenged my brother's death, let thine secure thee from any after resentment. Remember, that when thou hast by an arbitrary oppression expelled this poor man from out of his tenement, you must at last be forced to have some neighbour or other.

Mandragone all on fire by these words, snatching out his sword, drives at the young *Benedetto*, resolving to despatch him with his own hand. But he found soon to his cost that notwithstanding the advantage of his weapon, he had engaged a person brave and fierce as himself, who with a manly gripe seizing his arm, with one strong effort wrested his sword out of his hand, and with redoubled blows soon drove his impure soul out of his body. To avoid his being taken by the servants, who now on every hand surrounded him, having valorously sacrificed two or three to his brothers manes, he with a nimble address slit his own wind-pipe with the sword yet reeking with his enemy's blood.

This was the fatal mischief the strange prodigy portended, which being in this manner related to the disconsolate father, the old man unable to utter a word or secret tear, snatching up one of the knives with which he had been carving for his guests, he cut his own throat. In the midst of this confusion, a relation in the house seeing him breathe, took horse immediately and came to fetch me, to try if there were any means left to recover his kinsman, but he had done his business too effectually to leave me any possibility of applying my art. Who that considers

this tragical event, but must conclude, not only that there is a providence, but also, as its consequence, that there is an immortality of the soul, and future rewards and punishments fairly to adjust this reckoning between *Mandragone* and *Uberto*. The nobility, indeed, are generally puffed up with such an opinion of their quality, or riches, or power, or all together, that they believe themselves to be some superior species of beings, and that the laws of reason, religion, and common honesty were only made for the underlings of mankind, while they are exempt from all the obligations of society. There is no law can bind them, no religion influence them, nor any humanity move them to do justice and love mercy. Whereas in reality they are, generally speaking, inferior to all the rest of mankind, their native pride of birth weds them early to *ignorance*, which they are so fond of as to beget a numerous race of follies and vices by her, which distinguish their sires by impudence and violence. They are generally composed of two opposite ingredients, avarice and profusion, all *Catalines* in their temper, covetous of other men's goods but profuse of their own; or at once tenacious of their own and desirous of their neighbours'. Their ancient hospitality is lost, and generosity is fled from their order,

Operto capite (as *Petronius* expresses it) *bona sua numerant*, they pursue their own advantage without any regard to right or wrong. Either the little arts of trading citizens, as usury, extortion, &c., are their study, or else, which is worse, little perverted politics, directed to the devious path of their own private gain. In short, they are mere idols for fools to worship, the *calves of Bethel*, that have eyes and see not, ears, and hear not; mere machines of power set up on high for mischief, not benefit, that plead privilege for being fools and knaves, robbers and murderers.

Providence has already payed *Mandragone* part of his due, by cutting him off in the very bloom of his years and the full flowing tide of his fortune, adored and feared by the people, and courted by the great. His father was a younger son of a younger branch of the same family, at some distance from the hopes of the dignities and honors at which he arrived. A very indifferent post would once have been thought a very tolerable provision for him; and when he first left the college, it was thought that his ambition was not levelled much higher. But his youth and address gave him footing on the first round of fortune, by marrying a lady of some figure and fortune in the court. On this foundation he soon

got a post of consideration, and being master of a voluble tongue, abundance of assurance, some wit, a great deal of cunning, a plausible address, where he had any design to carry on, affability to most, whose hopes depended on him, with whom, by the doubtful promises he scattered among them, he filled up his levies; he soon thrust himself into the most important affairs of the nation; and having an enterprizing head, in the dubious times of war easily drew the management of the necessary support of the state into his own hands. By this and bribes, managing parties, and cabals, and the like, he amassed together a vast estate. But all that his avarice, rapine, and oppression of the people in the *gabels* had got, he left to this his only son, whose fate you have heard; who proving heir to his father's vices, as well as his ill got estate and the high dignity of Duke of *Rocca di Mandragone* that fell to him but a little before his death, having survived near twenty between him and this title, perished in the very act of injustice, oppression, and murder, and has concluded an impious family in an impious manner. *And may such or much worse, be the fate of all those, who sacrifice to their own private service the public interest of their country!*

The good *Astalli* having ended his discourse with some honest warmth, and the provincial being now pretty well recovered, returned his thanks and his benediction, we immediately pursued our journey to *Naples*. Where being arrived, we went directly to the chief convent of the order, called *Sancta Maria Nova*.

END OF VOL. I.

INDEX.

THE FIRST BOOK.

	Page
THE EPISTLE DEDICATORY.....	iii
PREFACE.....	viii
INTRODUCTION.....	xvii
CHAPTER I.—Of the country, parents, birth, education, person, temper, and inclination of Fantasio, and of his leaving his native country and arrival at Rome.....	1
CHAP. II.—Being an account of Fantasio's getting into the family of Cardinal Cantelmi, and of the festivals of gallantry, which the noblemen of Rome make in the churches for the entertainment of their mistresses, which brought him to the knowledge of Donna Theresa, the beautiful niece of the Cardinal.....	5
CHAP. III.—An account of the pleasure and luxury of the Cardinal's house, and the agreeable prospect of success to his fortune, till love intervened and lost him in a passion for the beautiful Theresa, niece to the Cardinal; and his greater distress in the Cardinal's infamous passion for him.....	16
CHAP. IV.—A description of the Villa of Cardinal Cantelmi at Tivoli: and an account of Theresa's going into the bath and Fantasio's admission to divert her with his discourse.....	21
CHAP. V.—The history of the fatal loves of Don Frederic and Catalina of Toledo.....	27

INDEX.

	Page
CHAP. VI.—The adventure of the bath, how Signor Fantasio got the possession of his mistress Donna Theresa, and what followed that success.....	41
CHAP. VII.—The history of Donna Theresa, of her birth and education, shewing her to be the daughter, not the niece, of Cardinal Cantelmi, her amour with Count Luciano, son to the Duke of Metalone, one of the Ardenti of Naples, with the letters and verses that passed between them.....	50
CHAP. VIII.—The continuation of the history of Theresa's life, and her amours with the Baron Casanatta.....	68
CHAP. IX.—A continuation of Donna Theresa's intrigue with Casanatta, and its tragical event. With the diverting adventures of those of Fascinetti, Carpegna, their wives, and the Cardinal.....	76

THE SECOND BOOK.

CHAPTER I.—Containing an account of Theresa's argument against marriage; the terrible death of the Marquis of Ancona and young Benvoglio her gallant: the intrigue of a grave matron of Sienna with friar Rinaldo: and of an old Sicilian physician's wife with a friar Minorette; the advantages of intriguing with the clergy... 103	103
--	-----

- CHAP. II.—Theresa's amour with a Dominican friar, and the pleasant ill luck of the friar's attempts puts an end to the affair. Fantasio's fears for himself from her inconstancy and the Cardinal's brutal love to him, prevails with him to make his escape in woman's clothes. 113
- CHAP. III.—Of Signor Fantasio's being taken by the banditti, and the adventure of the two Franciscan friars, who were severely whipped and turned out of doors naked, for using the fair ladies their host had provided for them. 121
- CHAP. IV.—An account of Fantasio's arriving at the banditti's castle. The relation of their robbing Cardinal Fourbin. And the ill success they met with in personating Cardinal Sermonetti. . . . 127
- CHAP. V.—The robbers continue their relations. The unfortunate end of their leader Spadavoni, in his attempt to get into an old banker's house; the same ill fate of Aquino, in his pillaging an old woman who by a stratagem threw him out of window. Francisquino's exploits at Sienna and his death. Their notable design on the house of a Florentine Marquis in the shape of a bear, in which Sparapani perished most manfully. 136
- CHAP.—VI. An account of the banditti's excursion, and bringing home a beautiful virgin called Camilla, from her mother's arms, the very night before the day of marriage. The excess of her grief: her ominous dream, and favorable interpretation of it. Fantasio's persuasions to ease her sorrows, and his going to bed with her; and the dangerous temptations he passed with her that night. 150
- VOL. I. A A

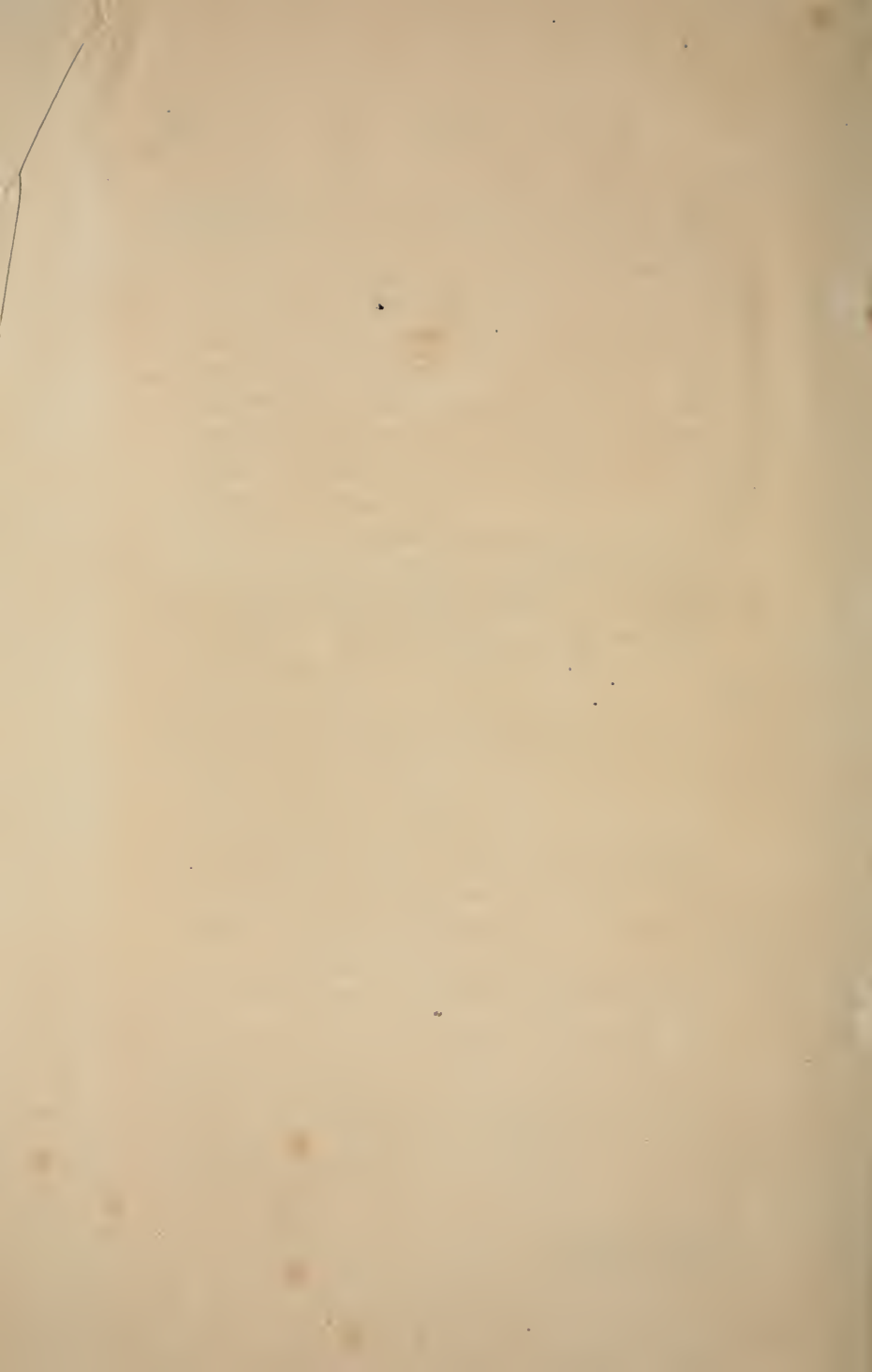
- CHAP. VII.—In the absence of the thieves Fantasio and Camilla attempt their escape, and get from the old woman their guardian, some way from the castle, but being met by the robbers, with opprobrious language are driven back again, and find at their return the old woman hanged by her own hands. They cast them into chains and deliberate on their punishment, which is deferred till the next morning. 166
- CHAP. VIII.—The arrival of one of the banditti with Scarpilegia, whom they unanimously choose for their captain, after he has given an account of his exploits and robberies in the Alps and in France. The cause of the ladies is revived; he adjudges them to be sold to the brothels of Turkey. The arrival of a friar, and his account of his love and the murders he committed for it. The delivery of Fantasio and Camilla by the admirable stratagem of Baldinotti. 174
- CHAP. IX.—Fresh troubles of Fantasio, and his flight from Fundi in a chest. The story of Julia Gonzaga, with Barbarossa, and the Duke of Mantua. Fantasio's arrival at Malfi, and passage to the house of Camilla's tenant, a great witch in the high mountain called Monte Marso. 197
- CHAP. X.—On Fantasio's arrival at Invidiosa; the wonders he discovers; the magical music he heard in the night; the song sung by the spirits. The old witch comes to bed to him: his terror and pains on it; and after surprise, when in his embraces she changes into a beautiful young lady. 207

- CHAP. XI.—The history of Biancha Pamfili or Invidiosa. Her marriage to a Franciscan friar. The discovery of his treachery. Her retreat to Monte Marso. Her study of magic and its defence. 215
- CHAP. XII.—The farther villany of friar Bernardo, in cuckolding his patron, which proved the death of the wife, her brother, and the friar. Fantasio's retreat discovered to the Cardinal. The pursuit comes to Invidiosa's house. She turns him into a fine Bologna lap-dog to preserve him. She is committed for his murder; and he carried away in that shape. 228

THE THIRD BOOK.

- CHAP. I.—Their departure from Amalfi and arrival at a village called Ouzano. Of the gelding, the parson of the parish. Their passage thence to the town of Cerino. The adventures of Philipino, Aretina, and Barbaro, and the unlucky intrigues of the fullers and bakers. 239
- CHAP. II.—Fantasio is bought by a friar, confessor to a monastery of nuns in Sarno. An account of the amours of the friars and the nuns, and of several of their profane verses to their recluse mistresses, and of the lewd freedoms they took with them the first night he was there. 261
- CHAP. III.—The history of sister Isabella, and how she was debauched by a friar at thirteen, under his pretence of taking possession of her for the Virgin Mary; with her adventures with the Dutchess of Sora, her becoming a nun, the ad-

	Page
dresses and letter of father Giovanni, her hate for men and love for her own sex, to which she endeavours to persuade sister Clara. What passed between the two sisters that night.....	273
CHAP. IV.—Of the marriage of friar Pietro to sister Clara. The unlucky adventure of the consummation, which was repaired by the conveying the friar to her cell to pass the whole night. An account of what books the friars furnished the nuns with.....	290
CHAP. V.—An account of the possession of some nuns, and their accusation of a secular priest for a magician, who was put to death for it by the Inquisition. Fantasio is given to the provincial of the friars, and so leaves this wicked crew of friars and nuns.....	306
CHAP. VI.—An account of a pleasing seat of Ludovico Astalli, a physician near Sessula. The history of his life. The wicked love of a mother-in-law for her husband's son. Her revenge on his obstinate virtue. The poison designed by her for him falls into the hands of her own child. The happy discovery of the son's innocence. Her punishment and death.....	315
CHAP. VII.—The continuation of the history of Astalli, with the tragical fate of Uberto and his three sons. The death of the young Duke of Rocca di Mandragone. Astalli's short invective against the exorbitant pride and insolence of the Neapolitan nobility.....	333



25 per cent

